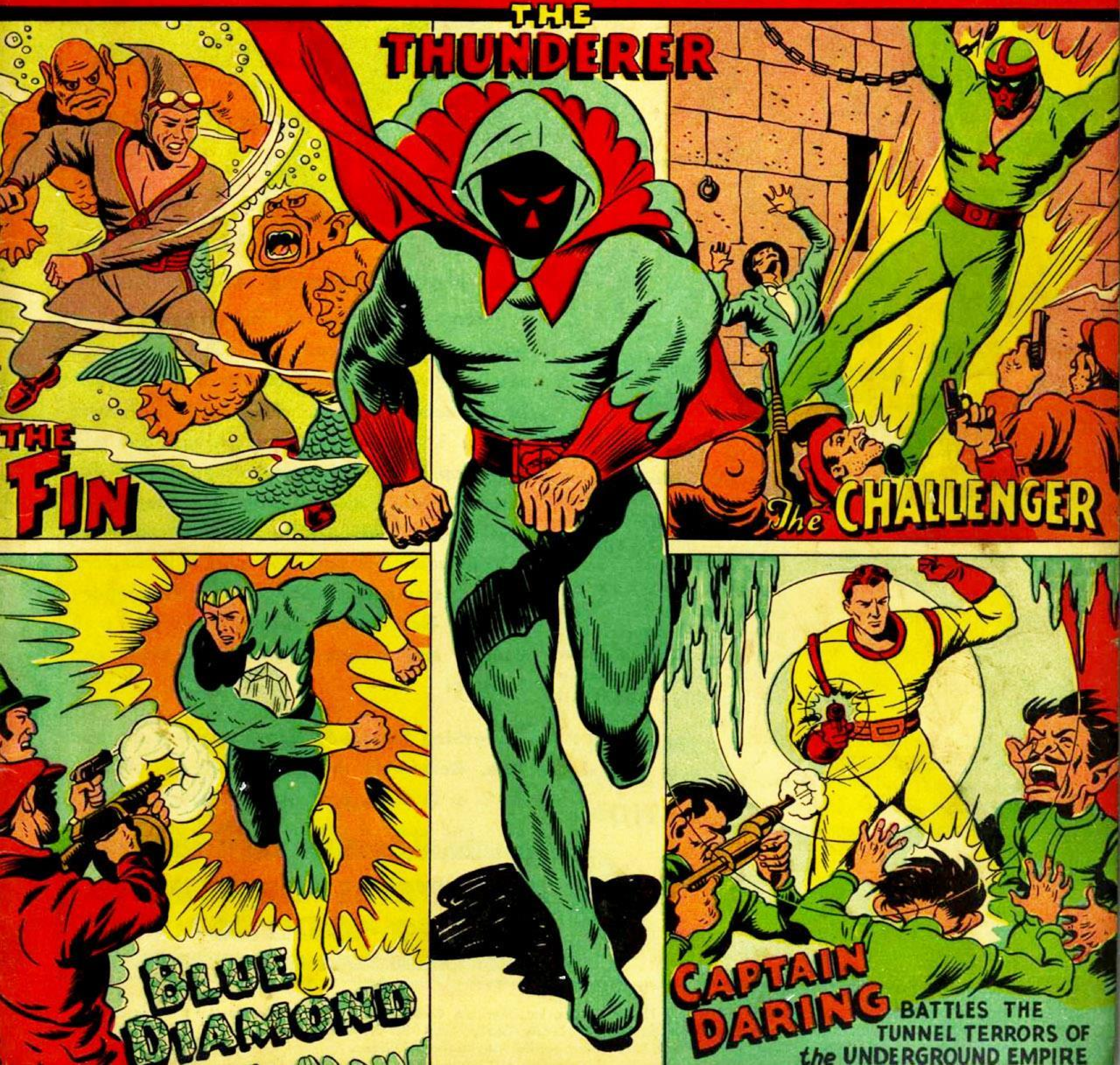
DARING MYSTERY COMICS

No. 7 10¢ APRIL


THE THUNDERER
THE FIN
The CHALLENGER
BLUE DIAMOND
CAPTAIN DARING BATTLES THE TUNNEL TERRORS OF the UNDERGROUND EMPIRE

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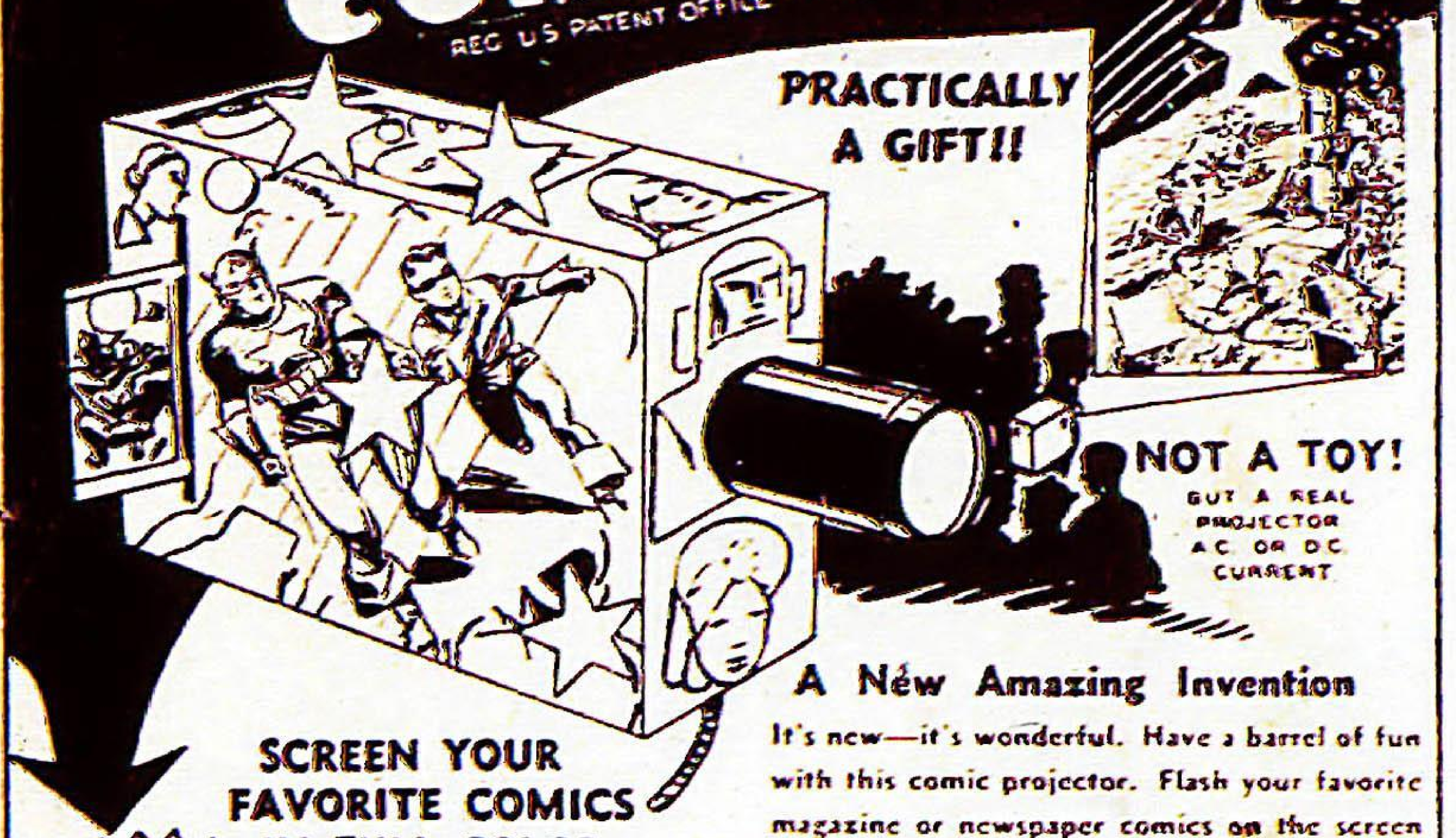
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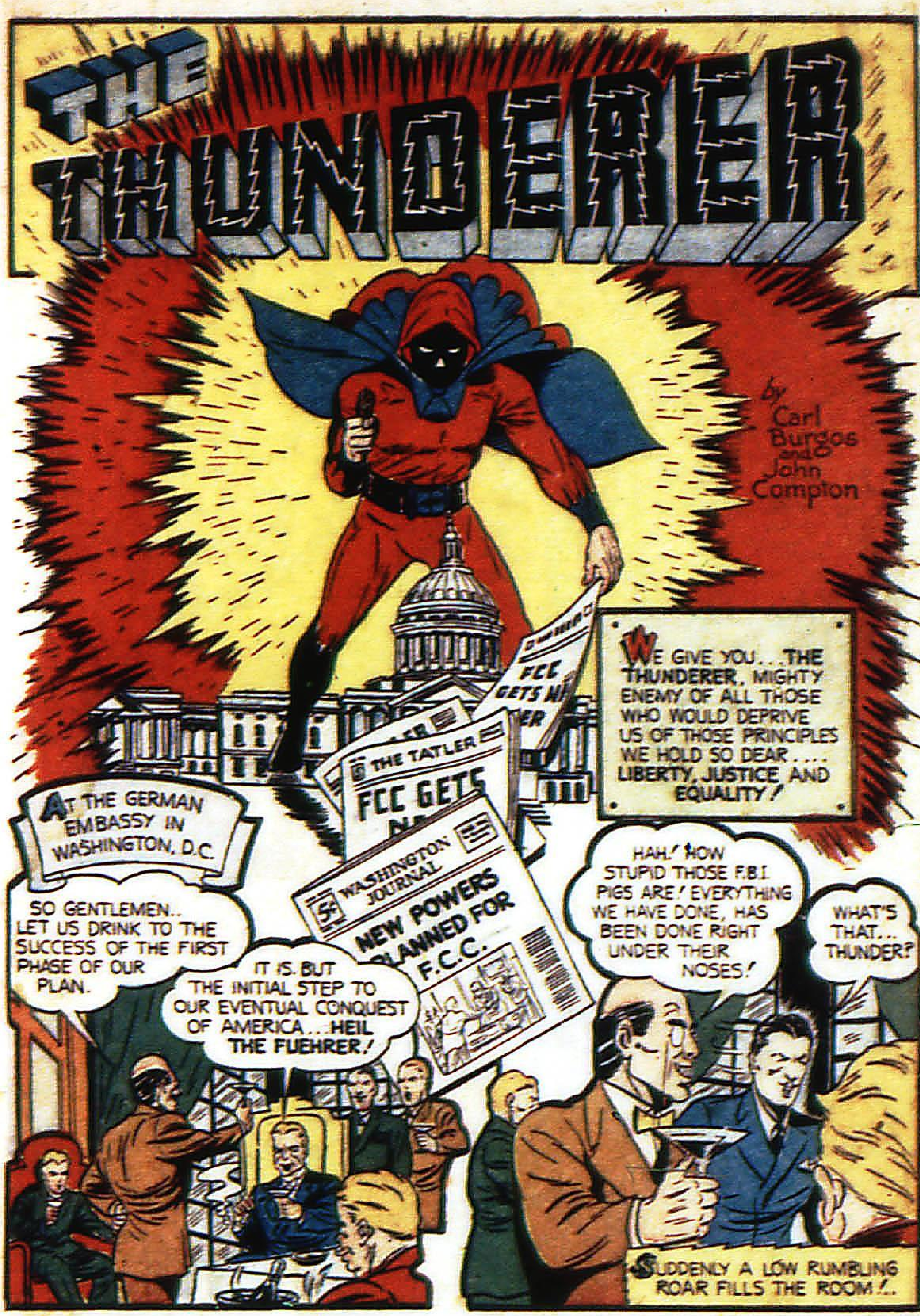
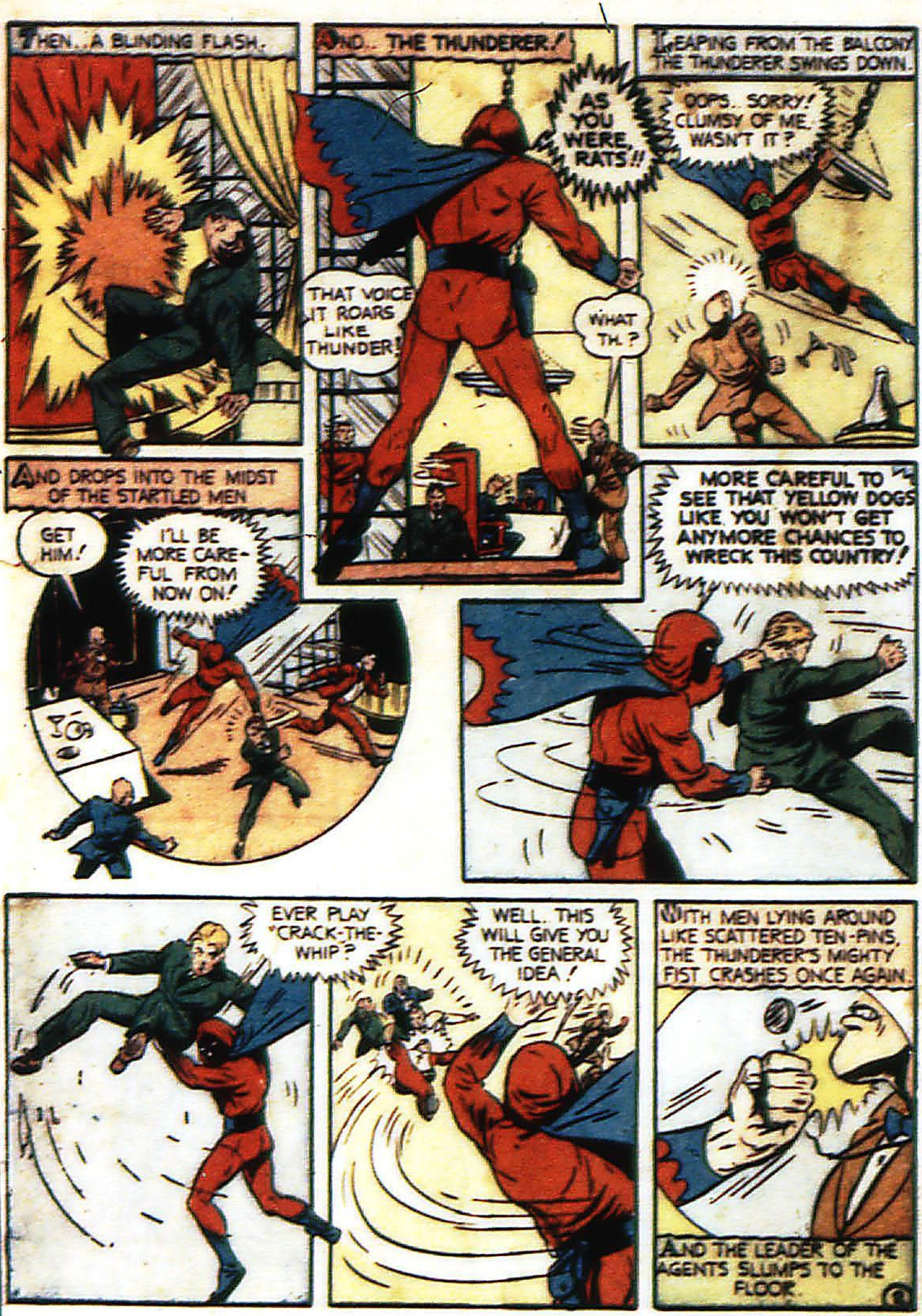
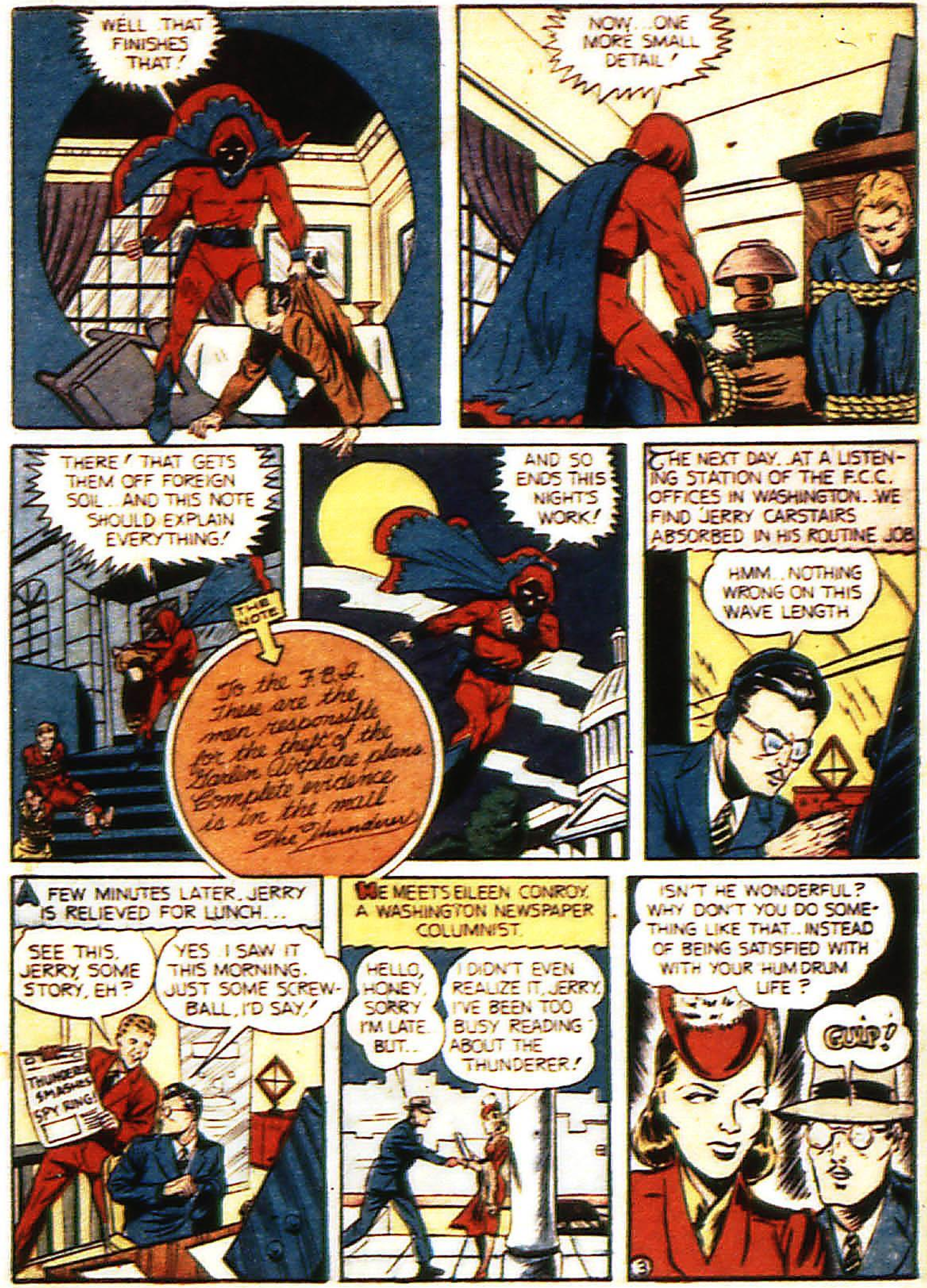
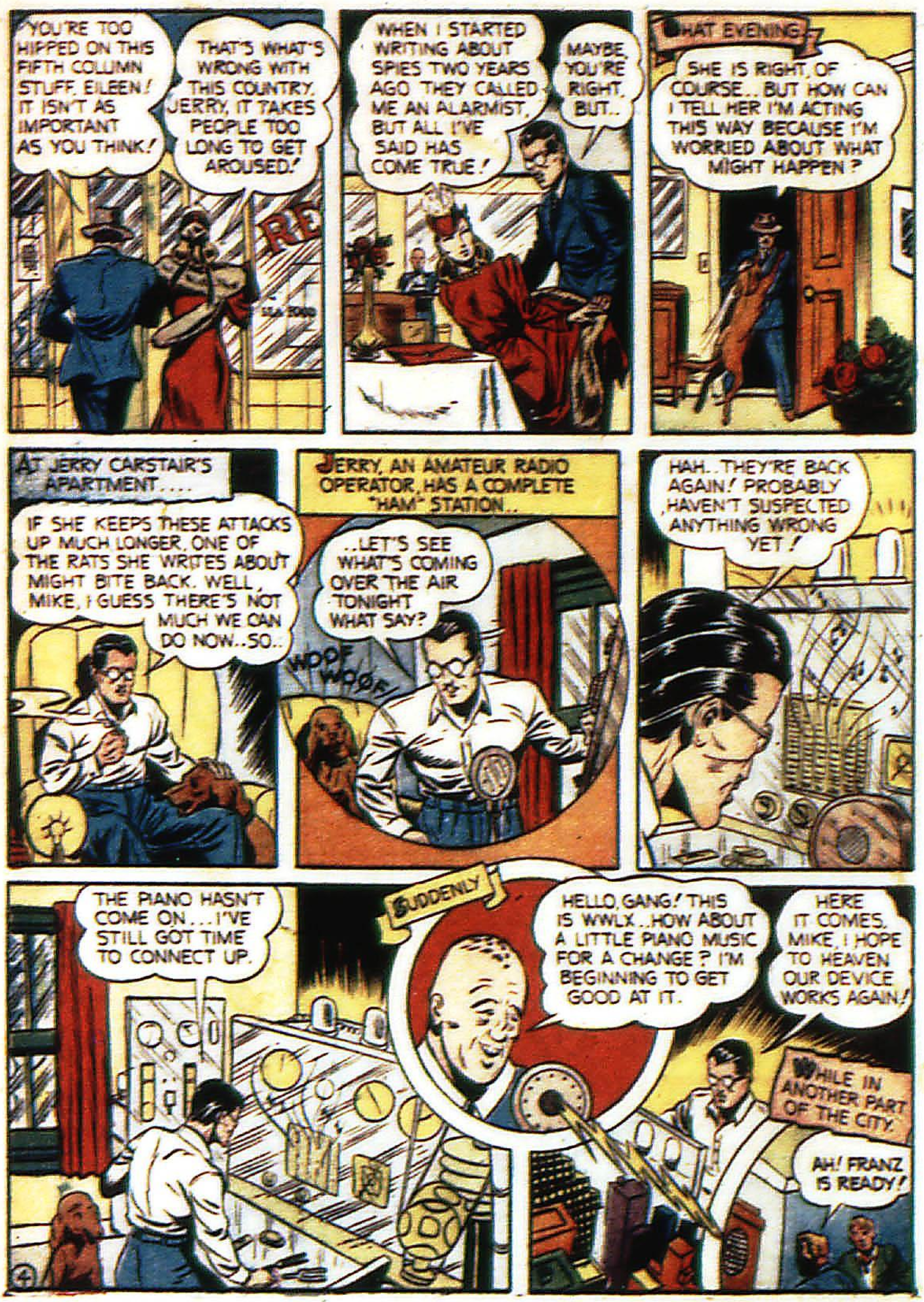
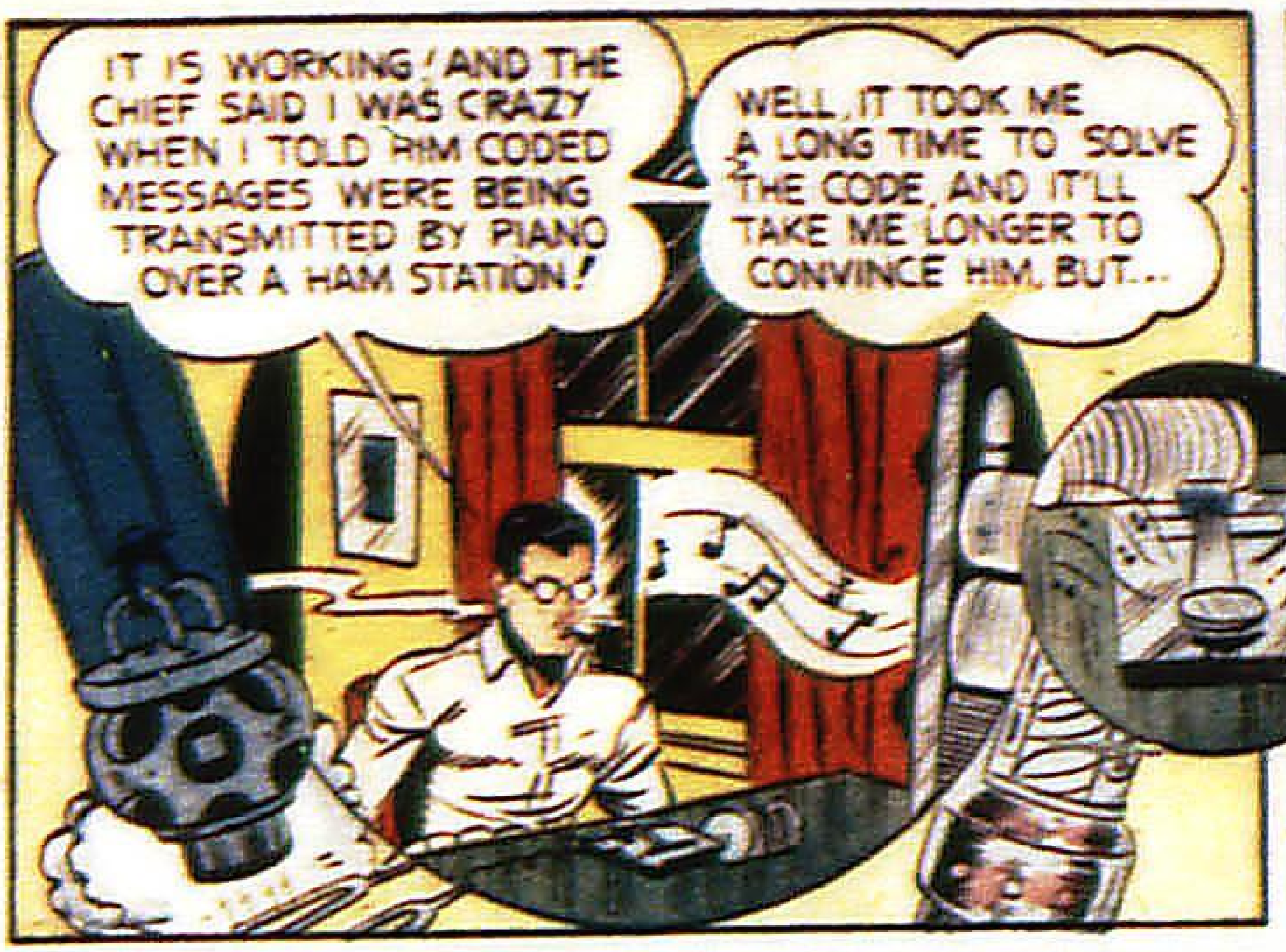
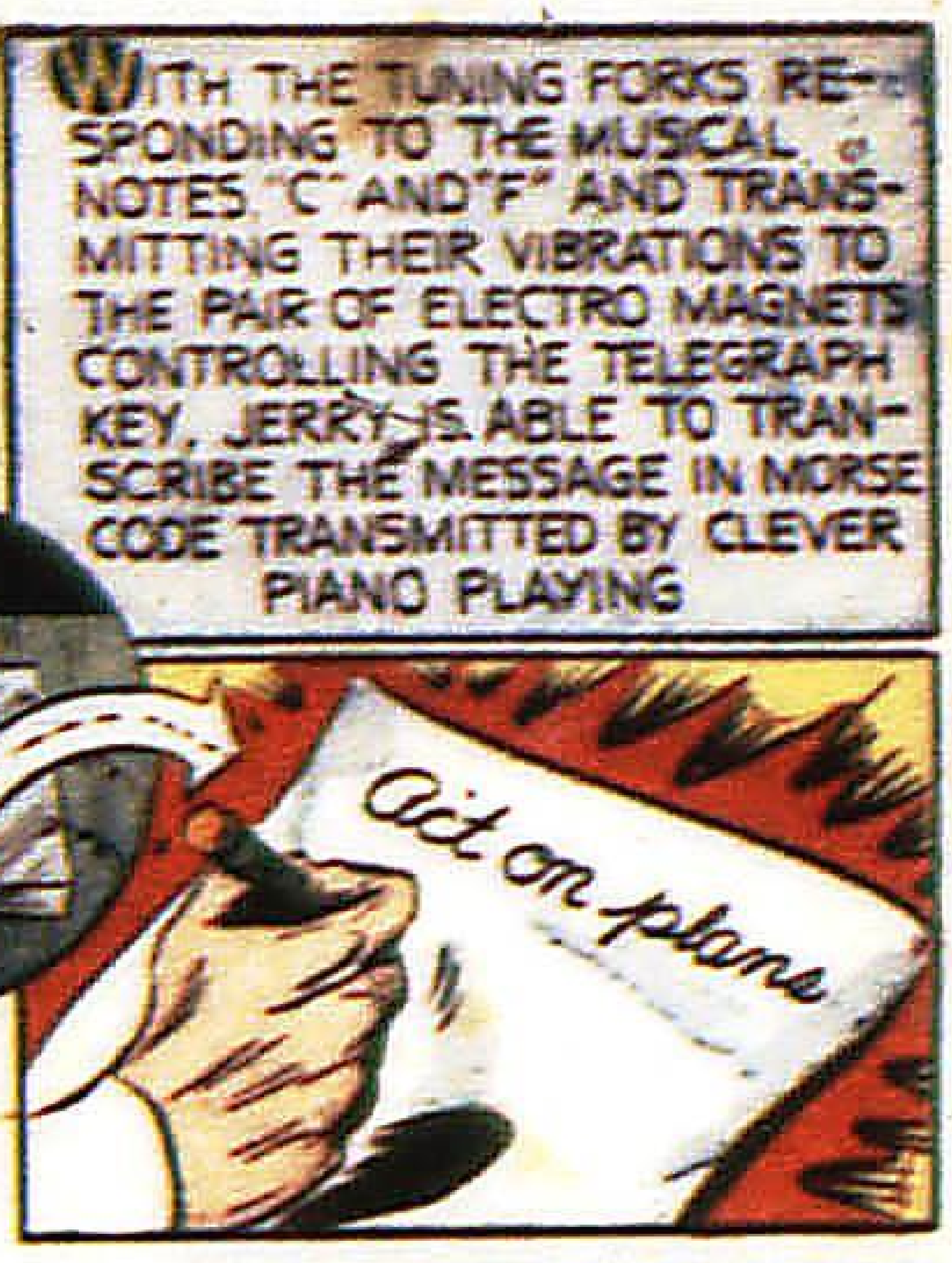

THE THUNDERER
by Carl Burgos and John Compton
FCC GETS NE… …ER
THE TATLER
FCC GETS N…
WASHINGTON JOURNAL
5¢
NEW POWERS PLANNED FOR F.C.C.
WE GIVE YOU... THE THUNDERER, MIGHTY ENEMY OF ALL THOSE WHO WOULD DEPRIVE US OF THOSE PRINCIPLES WE HOLD SO DEAR.... LIBERTY, JUSTICE AND EQUALITY!
AT THE GERMAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
SO GENTLEMEN.. LET US DRINK TO THE SUCCESS OF THE FIRST PHASE OF OUR PLAN.
IT IS. BUT THE INITIAL STEP TO OUR EVENTUAL CONQUEST OF AMERICA...HEIL THE FUEHRER!
HAH! HOW STUPID THOSE F.B.I. PIGS ARE! EVERYTHING WE HAVE DONE, HAS BEEN DONE RIGHT UNDER THEIR NOSES!
WHAT'S THAT... THUNDER?
SUDDENLY A LOW RUMBLING ROAR FILLS THE ROOM!..

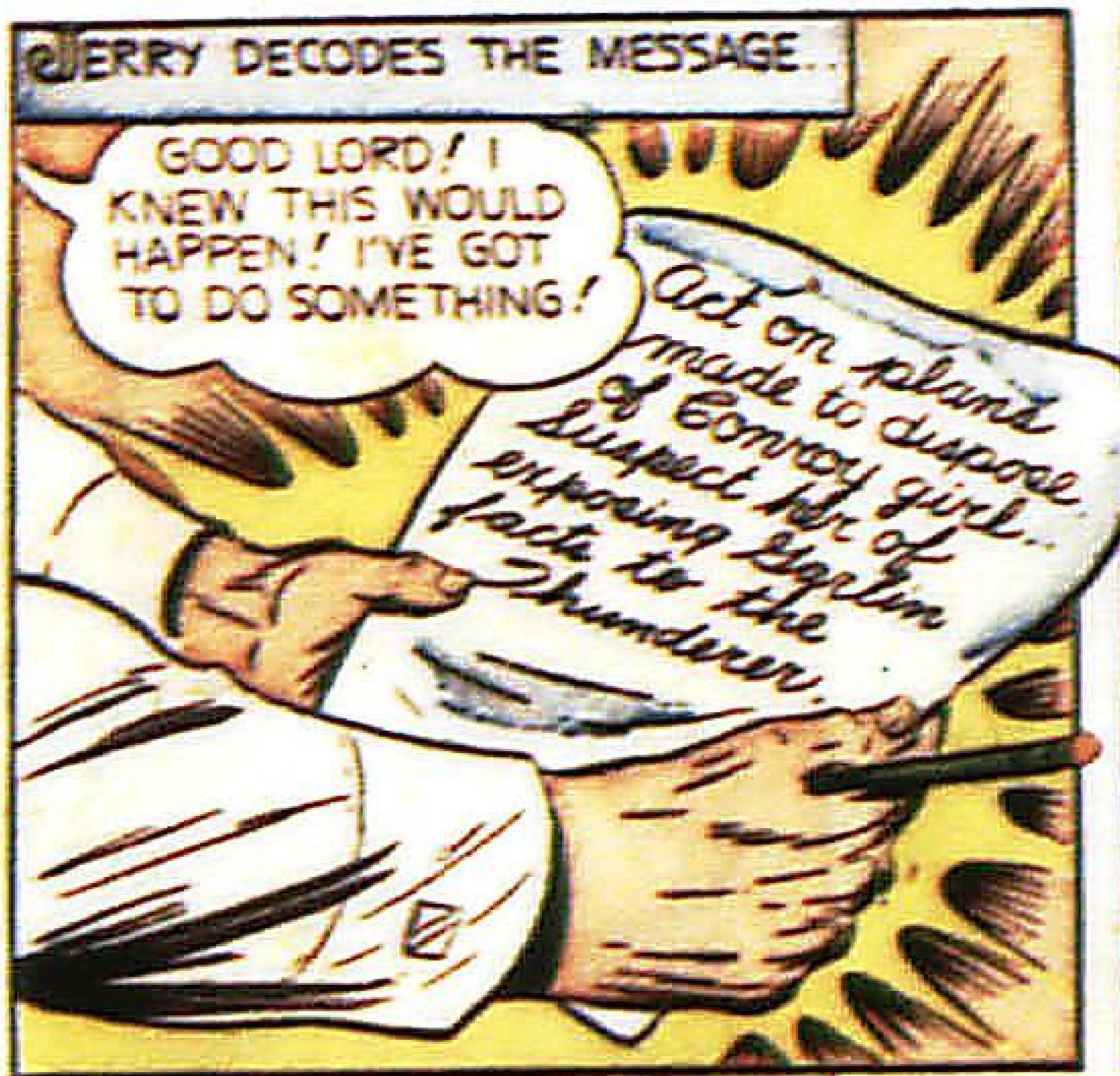

THEN.. A BLINDING FLASH.
AND.. THE THUNDERER!
AS YOU WERE, RATS!!
THAT VOICE IT ROARS LIKE THUNDER!
WHAT TH..?
LEAPING FROM THE BALCONY THE THUNDERER SWINGS DOWN.
OOPS.. SORRY! CLUMSY OF ME. WASN'T IT?
AND DROPS INTO THE MIDST OF THE STARTLED MEN
GET HIM!
I'LL BE MORE CAREFUL FROM NOW ON!
MORE CAREFUL TO SEE THAT YELLOW DOGS LIKE YOU WON'T GET ANYMORE CHANCES TO WRECK THIS COUNTRY!
EVER PLAY "CRACK-THE-WHIP"?
WELL.. THIS WILL GIVE YOU THE GENERAL IDEA!
WITH MEN LYING AROUND LIKE SCATTERED TEN-PINS, THE THUNDERER'S MIGHTY FIST CRASHES ONCE AGAIN.
AND THE LEADER OF THE AGENTS SLUMPS TO THE FLOOR.

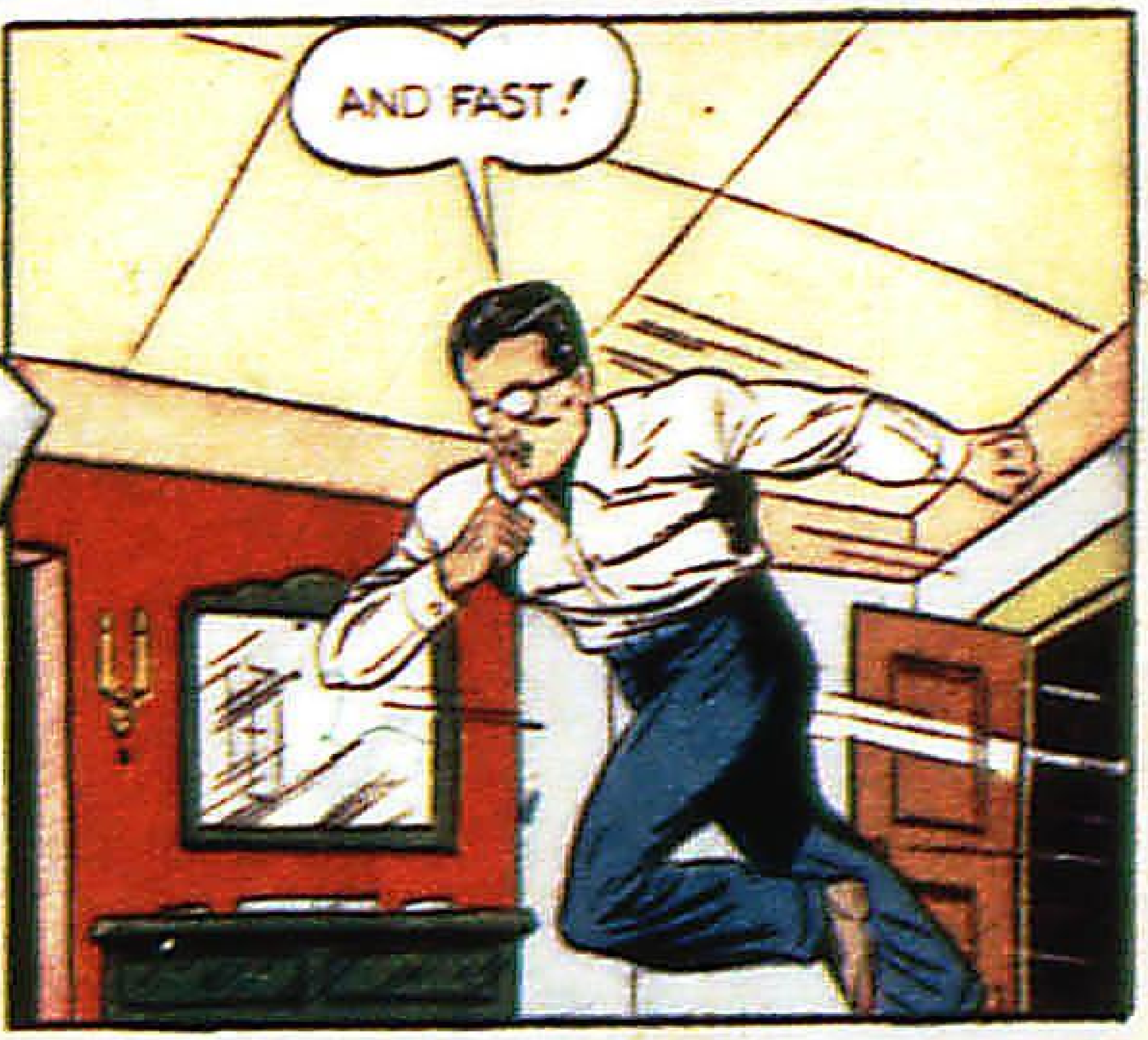

WELL THAT FINISHES THAT!
NOW... ONE MORE SMALL DETAIL!
THERE! THAT GETS THEM OFF FOREIGN SOIL... AND THIS NOTE SHOULD EXPLAIN EVERYTHING!
THE NOTE
To the F.B.I. These are the men responsible for the theft of the Gardin Airplane plans Complete evidence is in the mail The Thunderer
AND SO ENDS THIS NIGHT'S WORK!
THE NEXT DAY... AT A LISTENING STATION OF THE F.C.C. OFFICES IN WASHINGTON... WE FIND JERRY CARSTAIRS ABSORBED IN HIS ROUTINE JOB
HMM... NOTHING WRONG ON THIS WAVE LENGTH
A FEW MINUTES LATER, JERRY IS RELIEVED FOR LUNCH...
SEE THIS, JERRY, SOME STORY, EH?
YES, I SAW IT THIS MORNING. JUST SOME SCREWBALL, I'D SAY!
THUNDERER SMASHES SPY RING!
HE MEETS EILEEN CONROY, A WASHINGTON NEWSPAPER COLUMNIST.
HELLO, HONEY, SORRY I'M LATE. BUT..
I DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE IT, JERRY, I'VE BEEN TOO BUSY READING ABOUT THE THUNDERER!
ISN'T HE WONDERFUL? WHY DON'T YOU DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT... INSTEAD OF BEING SATISFIED WITH WITH YOUR HUMDRUM LIFE?
GULP!
3

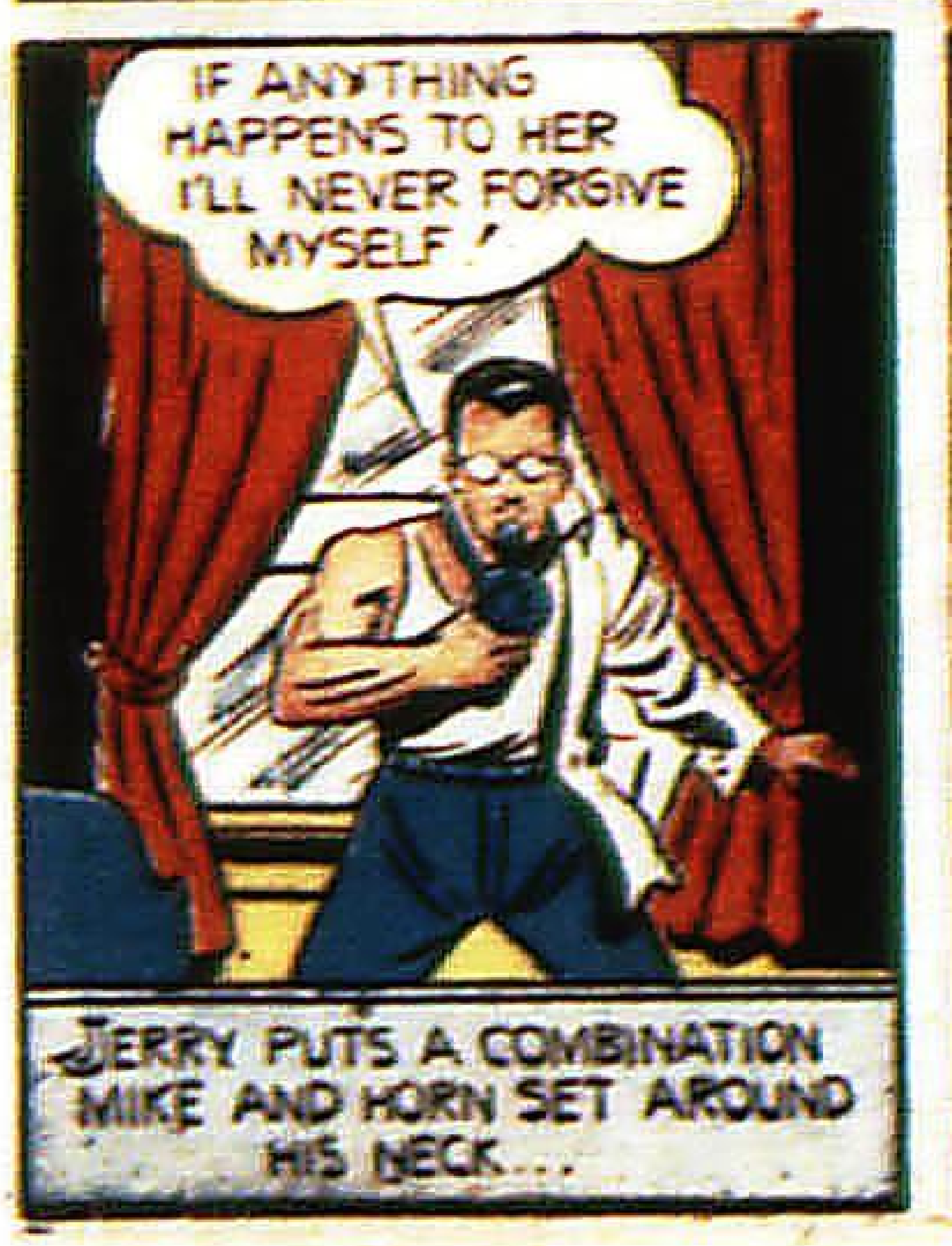

YOU'RE TOO HIPPED ON THIS FIFTH COLUMN STUFF, EILEEN! IT ISN'T AS IMPORTANT AS YOU THINK!
THAT'S WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS COUNTRY, JERRY. IT TAKES PEOPLE TOO LONG TO GET AROUSED!
RE
WHEN I STARTED WRITING ABOUT SPIES TWO YEARS AGO THEY CALLED ME AN ALARMIST, BUT ALL I'VE SAID HAS COME TRUE!
MAYBE, YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT..
THAT EVENING
SHE IS RIGHT, OF COURSE.. BUT HOW CAN I TELL HER I'M ACTING THIS WAY BECAUSE I'M WORRIED ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN?
AT JERRY CARSTAIR'S APARTMENT....
IF SHE KEEPS THESE ATTACKS UP MUCH LONGER, ONE OF THE RATS SHE WRITES ABOUT MIGHT BITE BACK. WELL, MIKE, I GUESS THERE'S NOT MUCH WE CAN DO NOW..SO..
JERRY, AN AMATEUR RADIO OPERATOR, HAS A COMPLETE "HAM" STATION..
..LET'S SEE WHAT'S COMING OVER THE AIR TONIGHT WHAT SAY?
WOOF WOOF!
HAH..THEY'RE BACK AGAIN! PROBABLY HAVEN'T SUSPECTED ANYTHING WRONG YET!
THE PIANO HASN'T COME ON... I'VE STILL GOT TIME TO CONNECT UP.
SUDDENLY
HELLO, GANG! THIS IS WWLX..HOW ABOUT A LITTLE PIANO MUSIC FOR A CHANGE? I'M BEGINNING TO GET GOOD AT IT.
HERE IT COMES, MIKE, I HOPE TO HEAVEN OUR DEVICE WORKS AGAIN!
WHILE IN ANOTHER PART OF THE CITY
AH! FRANZ IS READY!

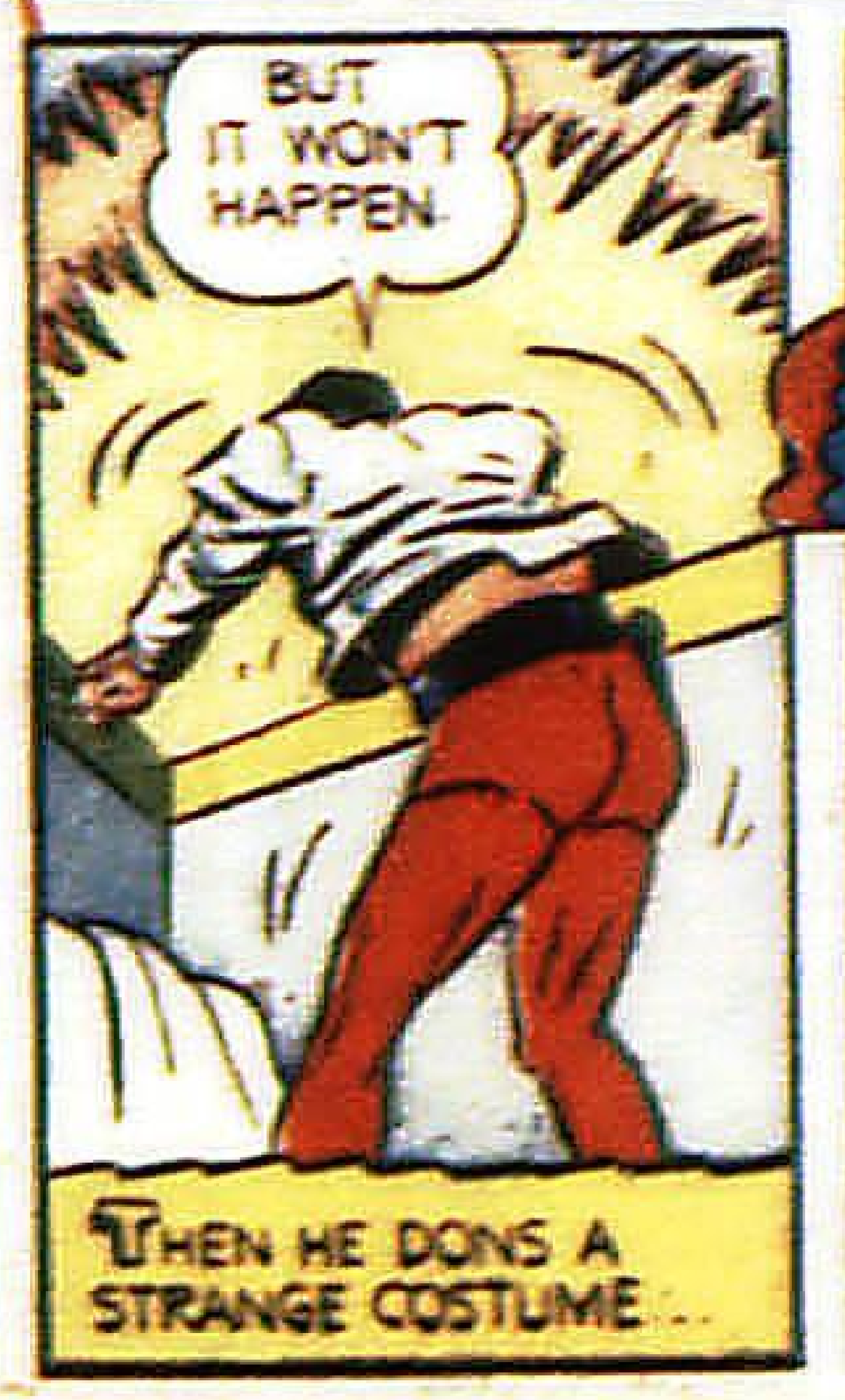

IT IS WORKING! AND THE CHIEF SAID I WAS CRAZY WHEN I TOLD HIM CODED MESSAGES WERE BEING TRANSMITTED BY PIANO OVER A HAM STATION!
WELL, IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO SOLVE THE CODE, AND IT'LL TAKE ME LONGER TO CONVINCE HIM, BUT...

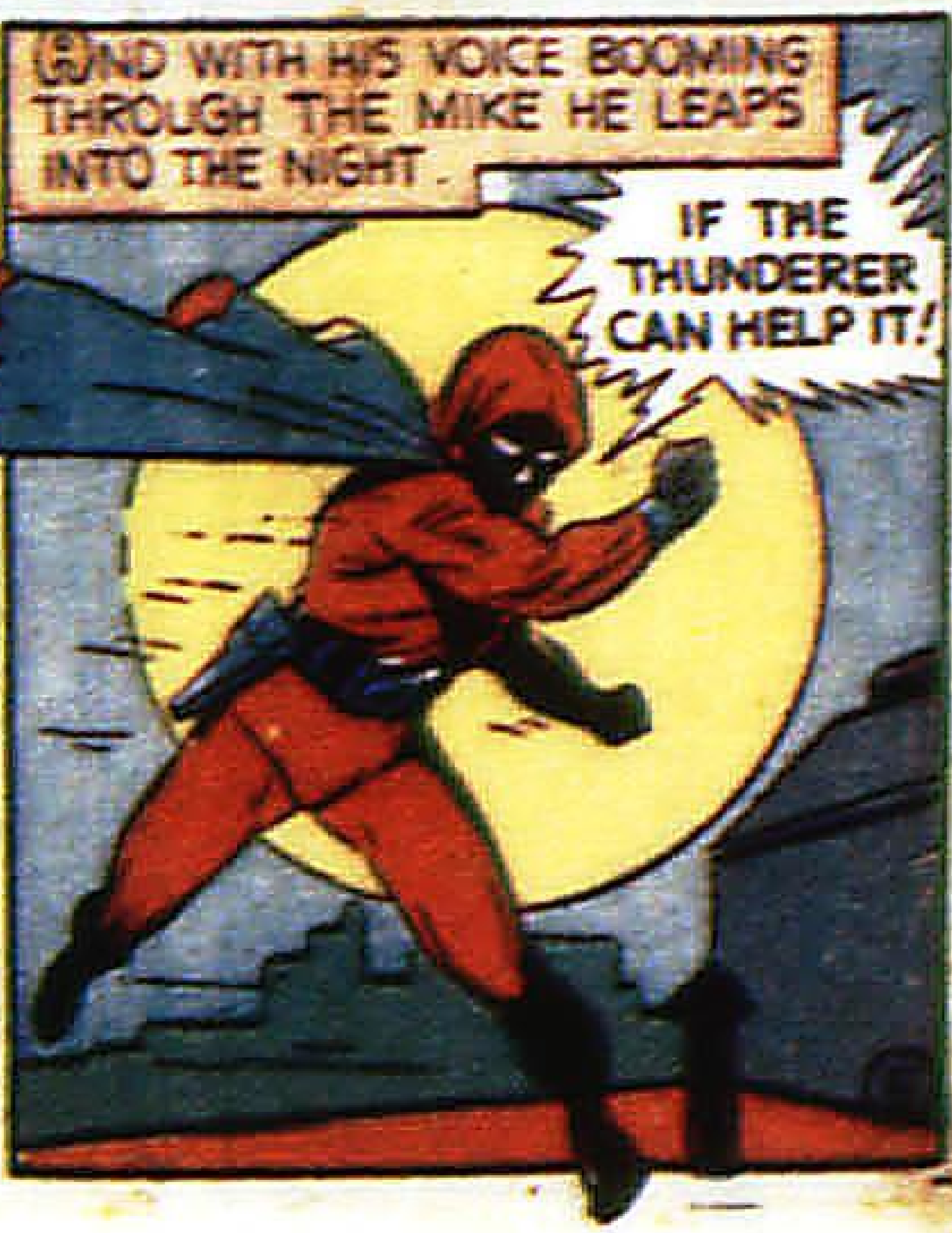

WITH THE TUNING FORKS RESPONDING TO THE MUSICAL NOTES "C" AND "F" AND TRANSMITTING THEIR VIBRATIONS TO THE PAIR OF ELECTRO MAGNETS CONTROLLING THE TELEGRAPH KEY, JERRY IS ABLE TO TRANSCRIBE THE MESSAGE IN MORSE CODE TRANSMITTED BY CLEVER PIANO PLAYING
Act on plans

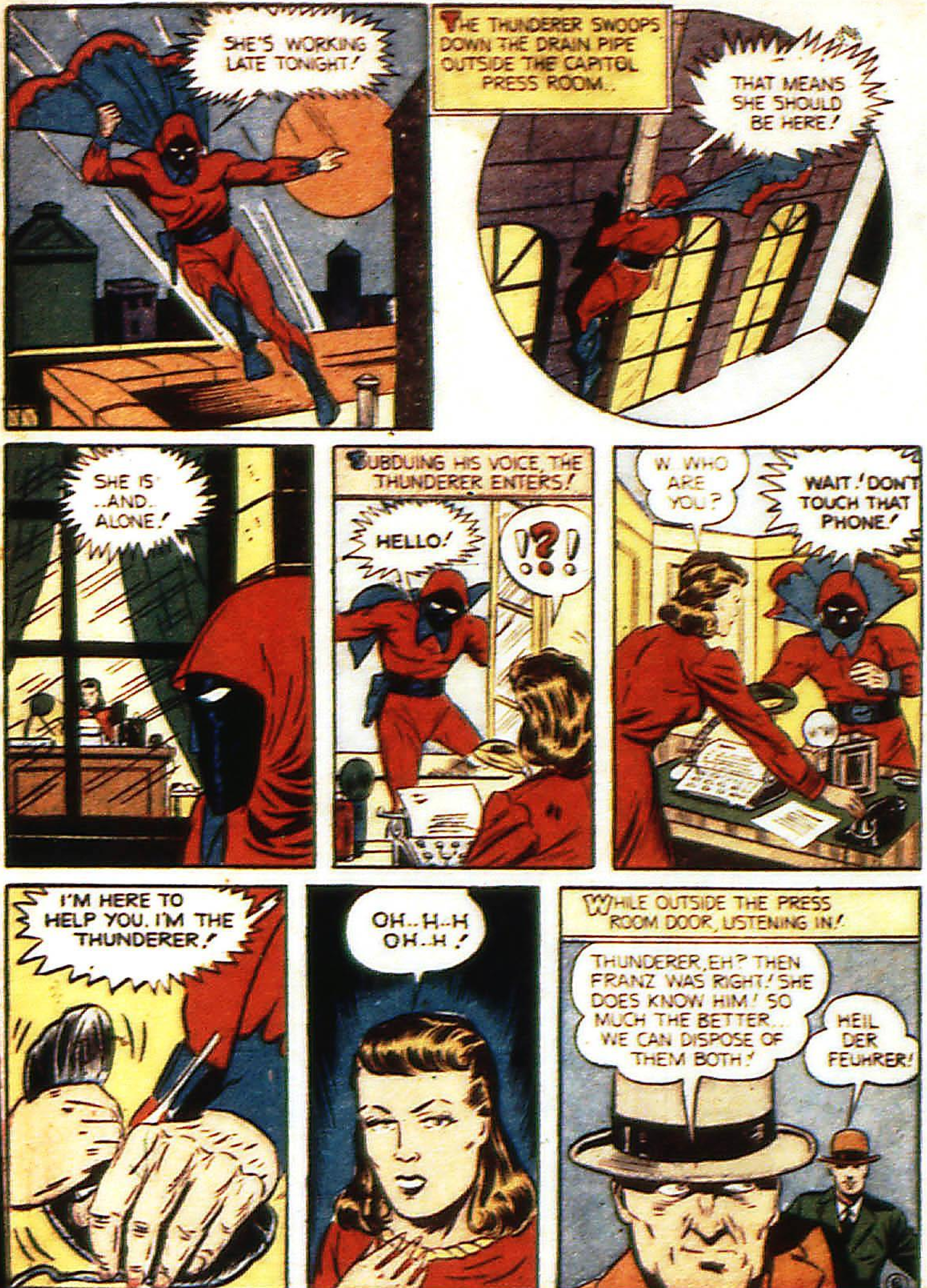

JERRY DECODES THE MESSAGE...
GOOD LORD! I KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN! I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING!
Act on plans made to dispose of Conroy girl... Suspect her of exposing Gaylin facts to the Thunderer.

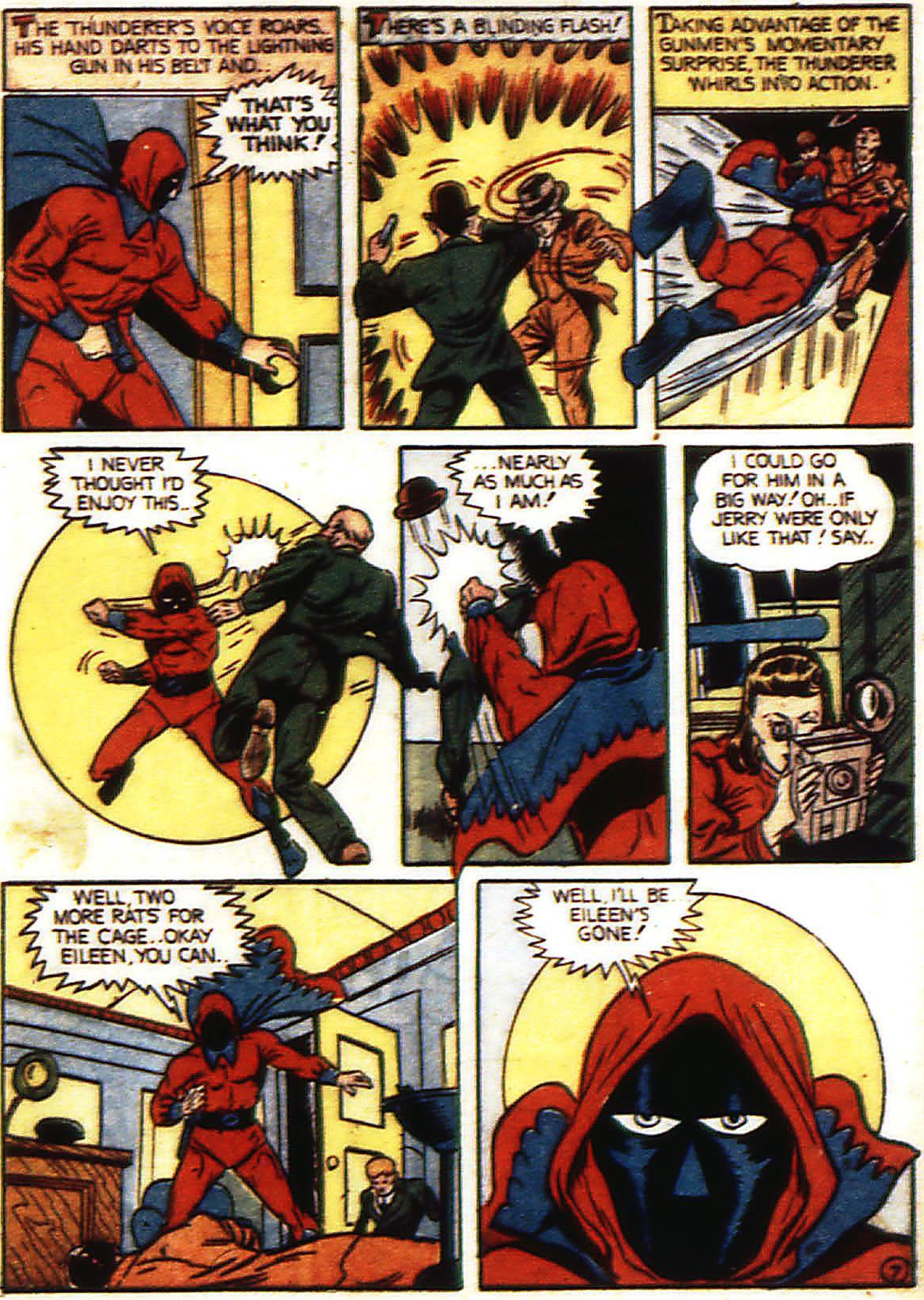

AND FAST!

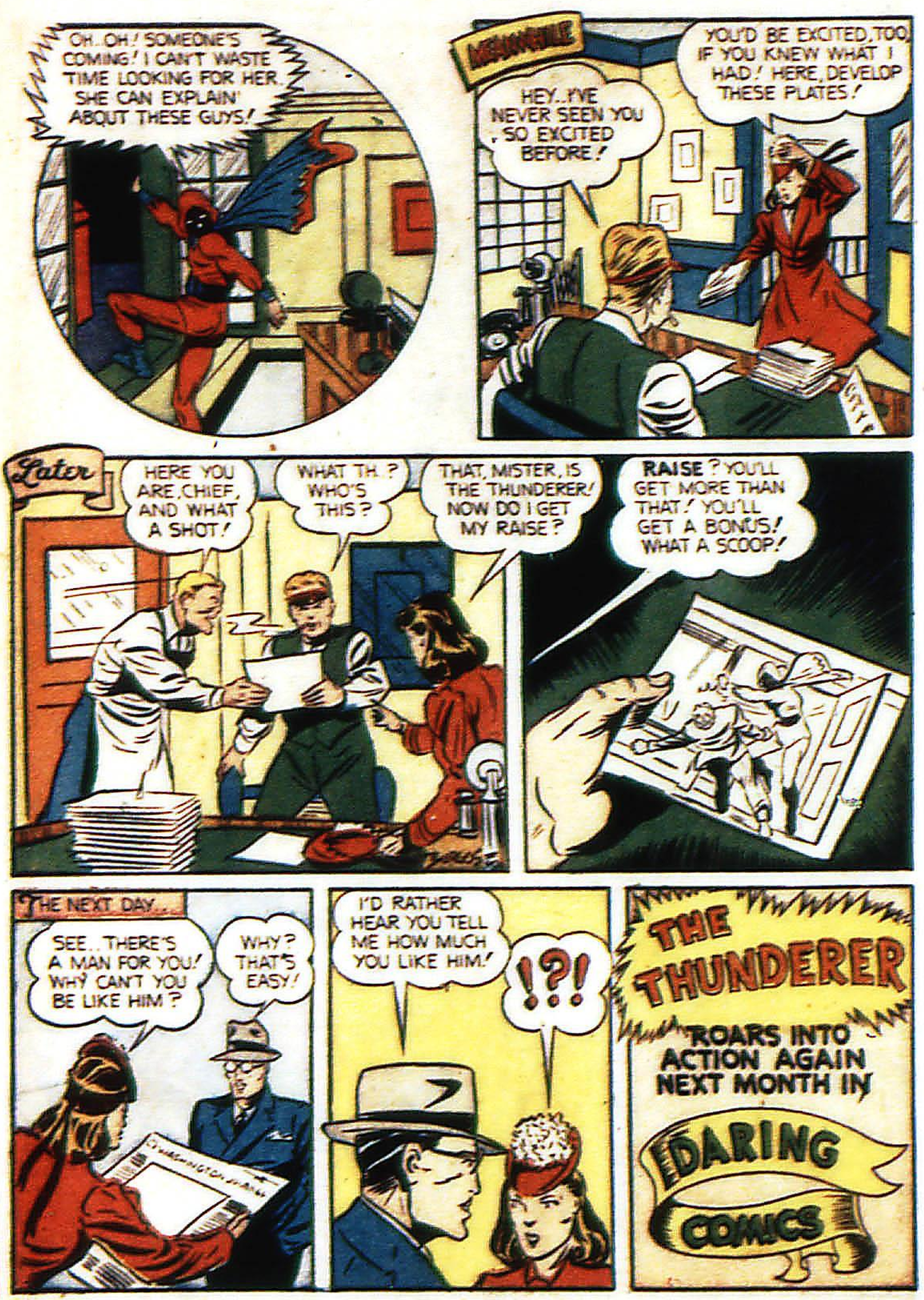

IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO HER I'LL NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF!
JERRY PUTS A COMBINATION MIKE AND HORN SET AROUND HIS NECK...

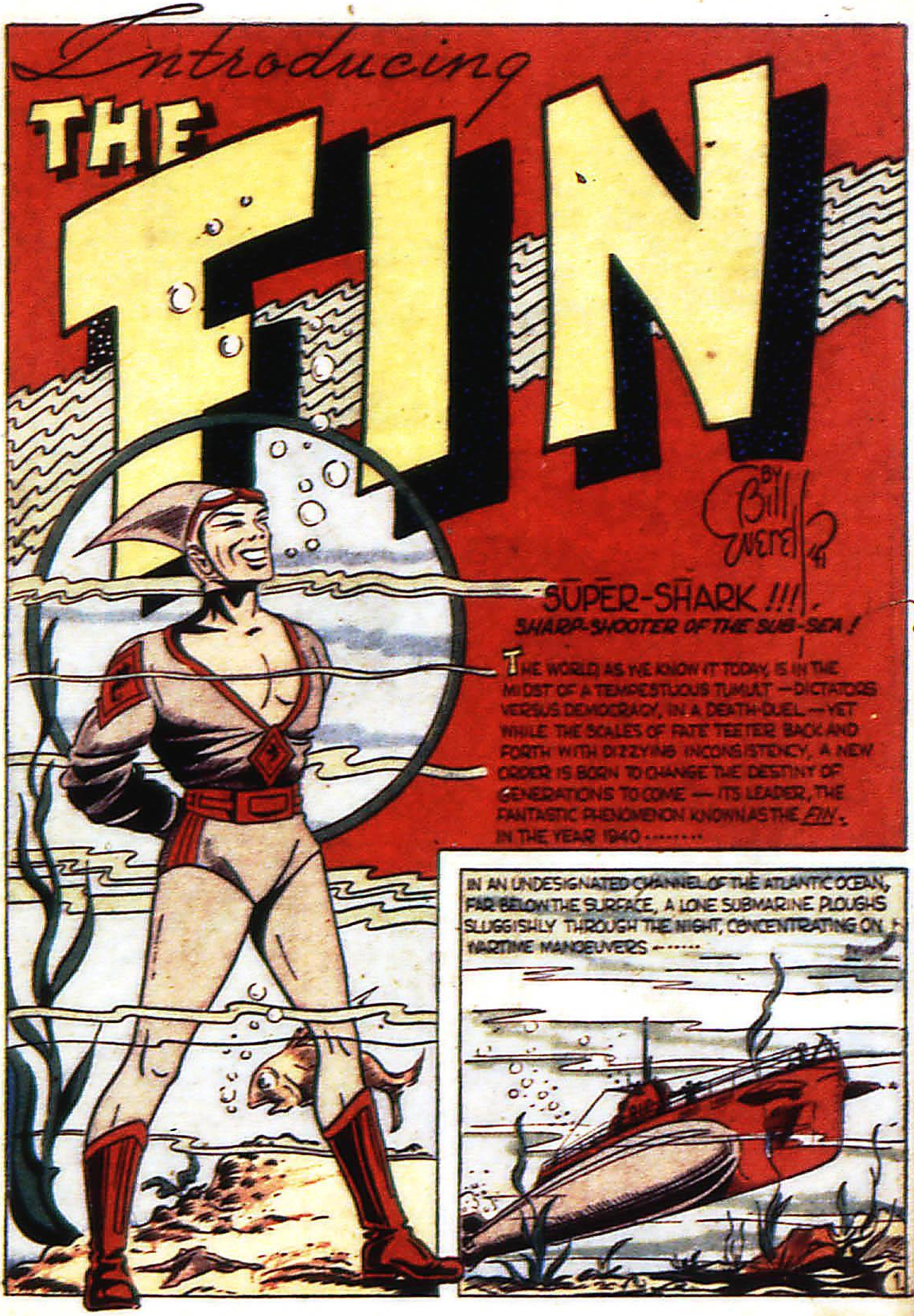

BUT IT WON'T HAPPEN.
THEN HE DONS A STRANGE COSTUME...

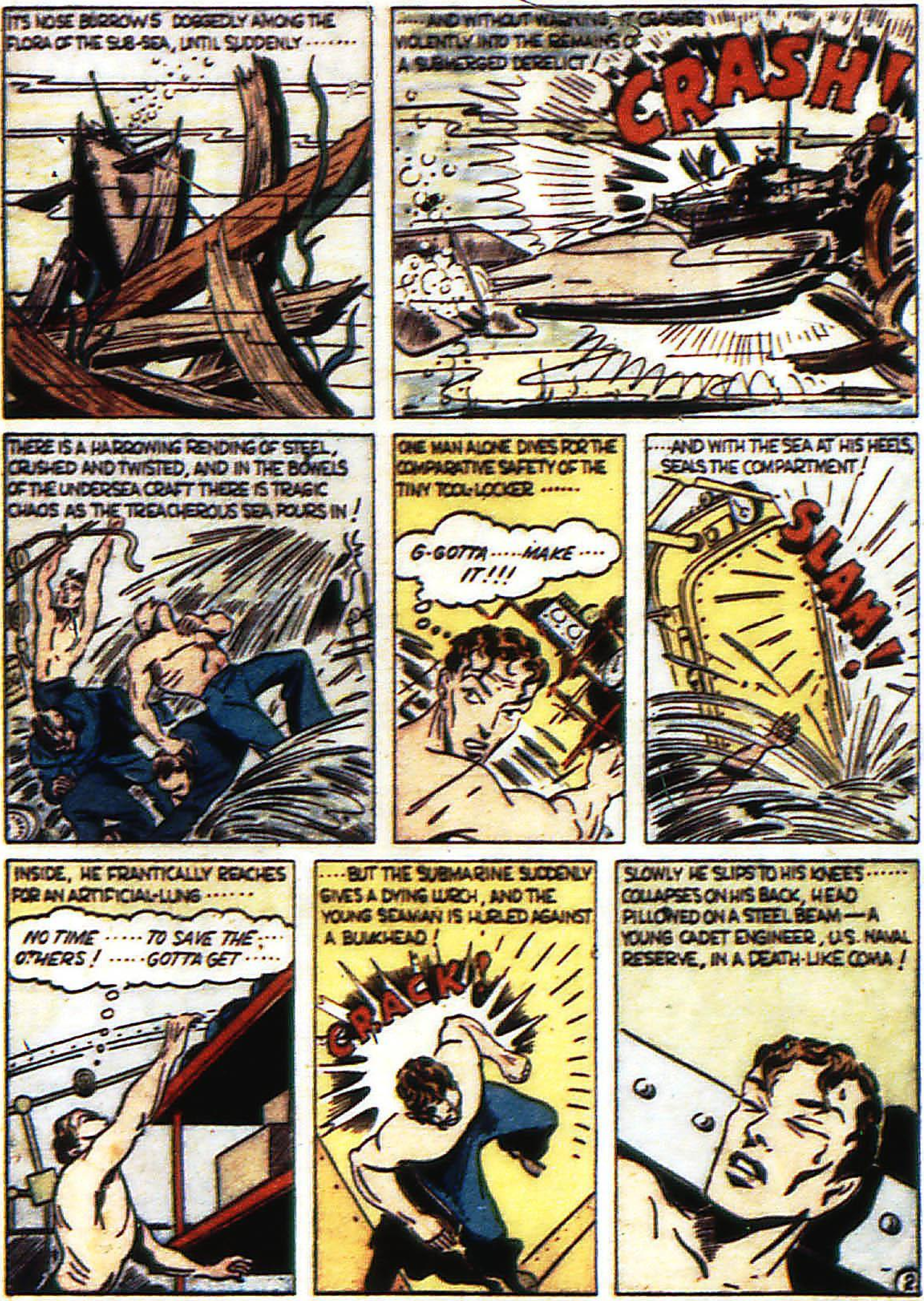

AND WITH HIS VOICE BOOMING THROUGH THE MIKE HE LEAPS INTO THE NIGHT.
IF THE THUNDERER CAN HELP IT!

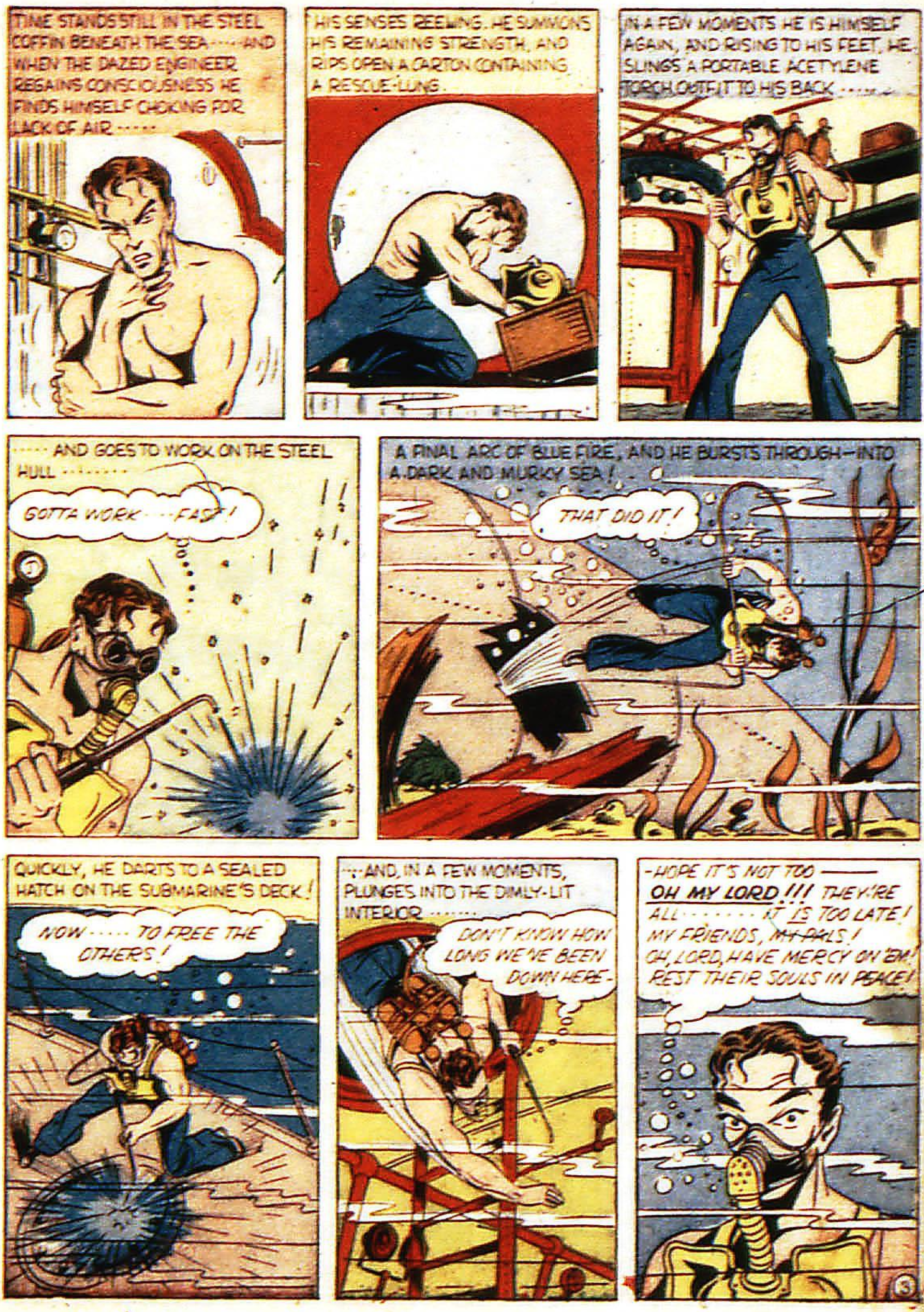

SHE'S WORKING LATE TONIGHT!
THE THUNDERER SWOOPS DOWN THE DRAIN PIPE OUTSIDE THE CAPITOL PRESS ROOM..
THAT MEANS SHE SHOULD BE HERE!
SHE IS ..AND.. ALONE!
SUBDUING HIS VOICE, THE THUNDERER ENTERS!
HELLO!
!?!
W. WHO ARE YOU?
WAIT! DON'T TOUCH THAT PHONE!
I'M HERE TO HELP YOU. I'M THE THUNDERER!
OH..H..H OH..H!
WHILE OUTSIDE THE PRESS ROOM DOOR, LISTENING IN!
THUNDERER, EH? THEN FRANZ WAS RIGHT! SHE DOES KNOW HIM! SO MUCH THE BETTER... WE CAN DISPOSE OF THEM BOTH!
HEIL DER FEUHRER!
6

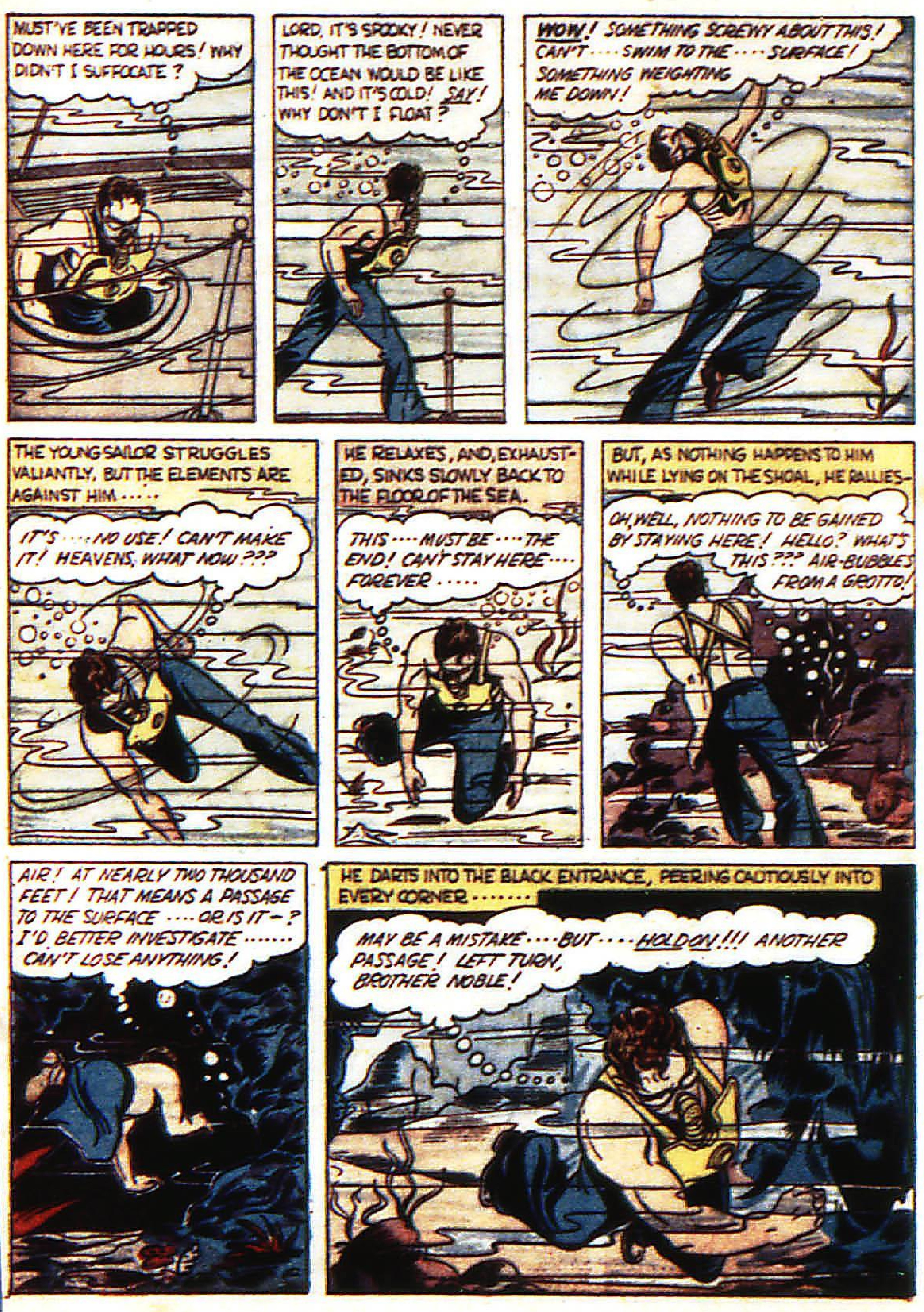

THE THUNDERER'S VOICE ROARS.. HIS HAND DARTS TO THE LIGHTNING GUN IN HIS BELT AND..
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK!
THERE'S A BLINDING FLASH!
TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE GUNMEN'S MOMENTARY SURPRISE, THE THUNDERER WHIRLS INTO ACTION.
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D ENJOY THIS..
...NEARLY AS MUCH AS I AM!
I COULD GO FOR HIM IN A BIG WAY! OH..IF JERRY WERE ONLY LIKE THAT! SAY..
WELL, TWO MORE RATS FOR THE CAGE..OKAY EILEEN, YOU CAN..
WELL, I'LL BE.. EILEEN'S GONE!

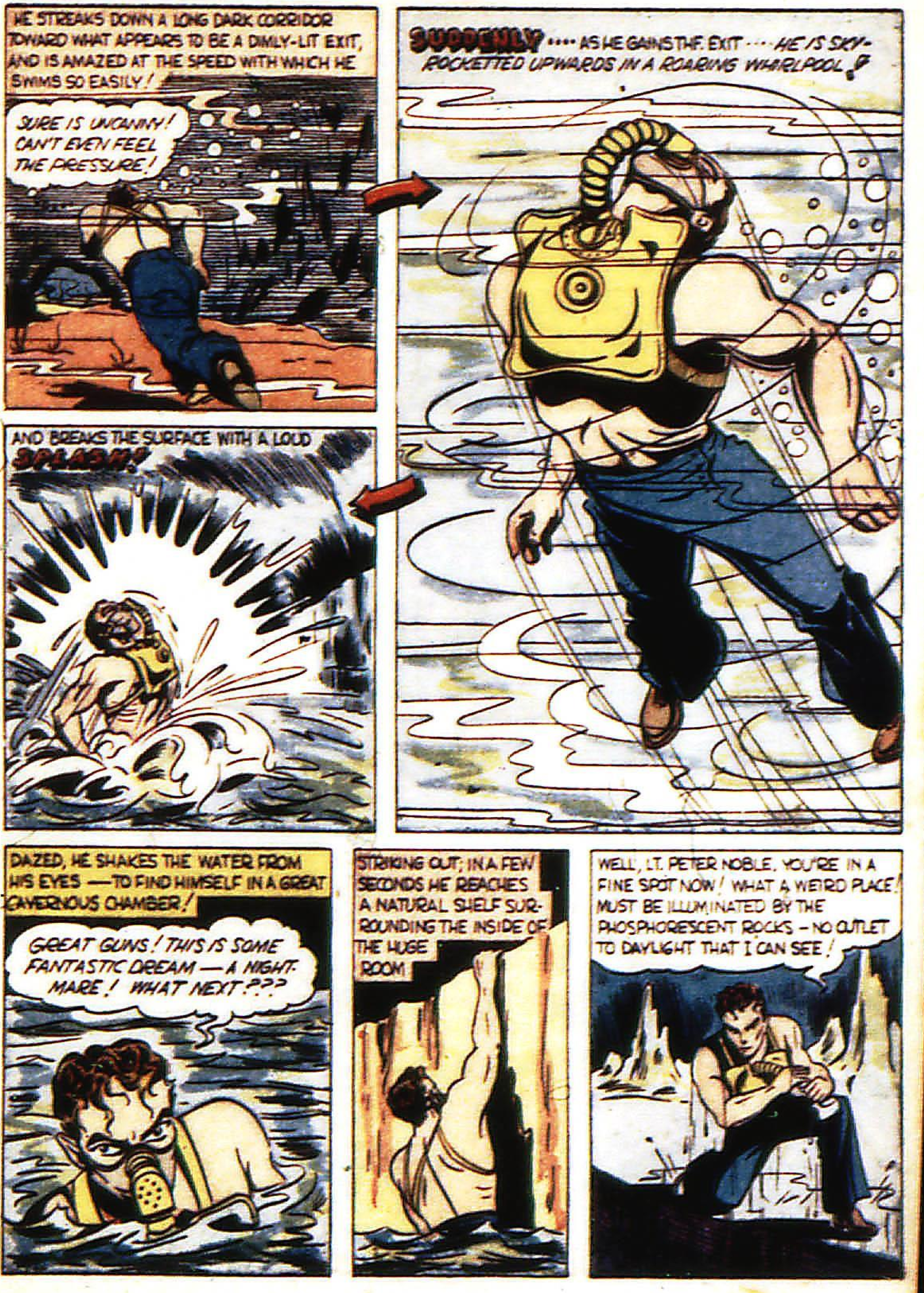

OH..OH! SOMEONE'S COMING! I CAN'T WASTE TIME LOOKING FOR HER. SHE CAN EXPLAIN' ABOUT THESE GUYS!
MEANWHILE
HEY..I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU SO EXCITED BEFORE!
YOU'D BE EXCITED, TOO, IF YOU KNEW WHAT I HAD! HERE, DEVELOP THESE PLATES!
Later
HERE YOU ARE, CHIEF, AND WHAT A SHOT!
WHAT TH..? WHO'S THIS?
THAT, MISTER, IS THE THUNDERER! NOW DO I GET MY RAISE?
RAISE? YOU'LL GET MORE THAN THAT! YOU'LL GET A BONUS! WHAT A SCOOP!
THE NEXT DAY...
SEE..THERE'S A MAN FOR YOU! WHY CAN'T YOU BE LIKE HIM?
WHY? THAT'S EASY!
I'D RATHER HEAR YOU TELL ME HOW MUCH YOU LIKE HIM!
!?!
THE THUNDERER
ROARS INTO ACTION AGAIN NEXT MONTH IN
DARING COMICS

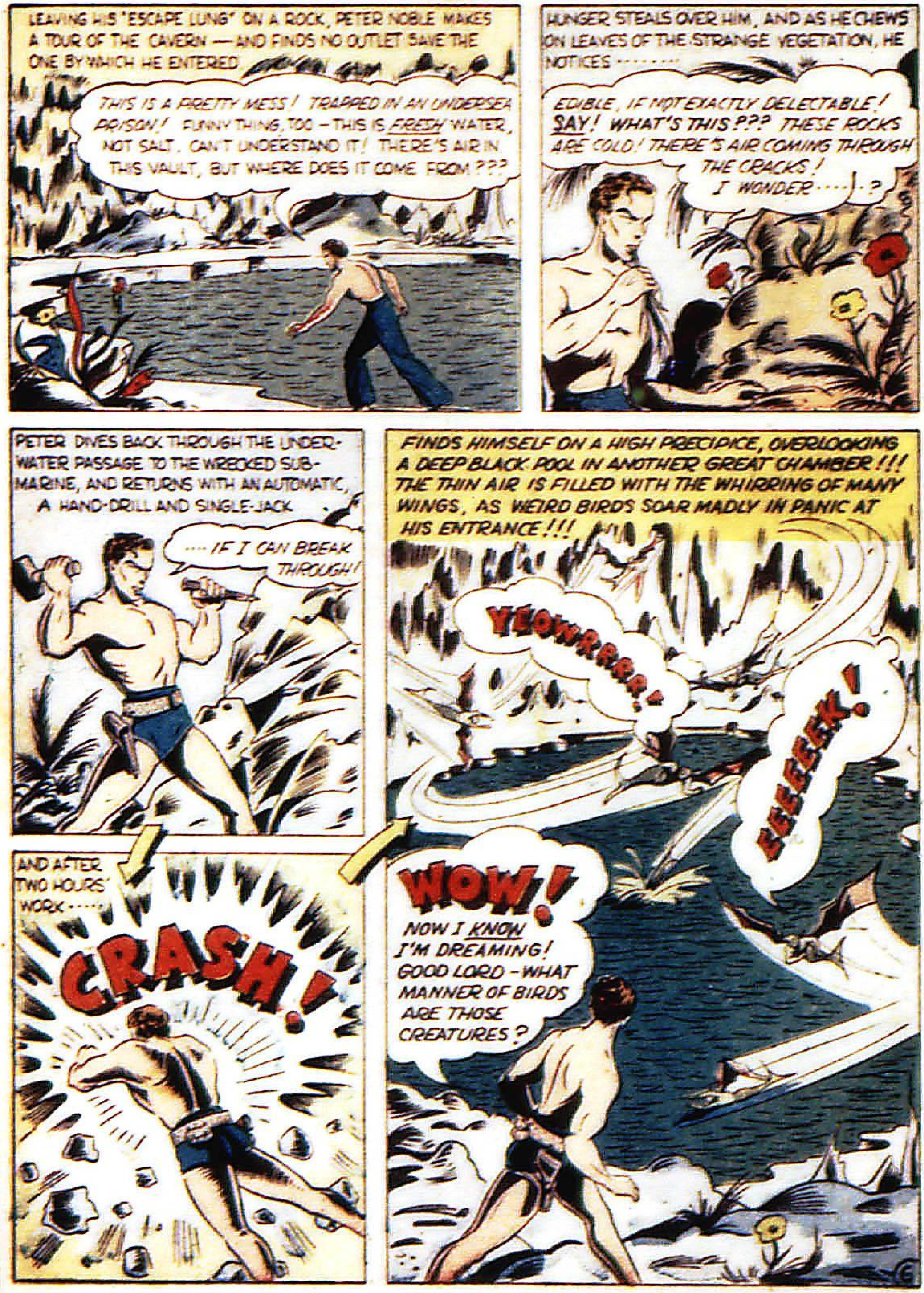

Introducing
THE FIN
BY Bill Everett '41
SUPER-SHARK !!!
SHARP-SHOOTER OF THE SUB-SEA !
THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT TODAY, IS IN THE MIDST OF A TEMPESTUOUS TUMULT —DICTATORS VERSUS DEMOCRACY, IN A DEATH-DUEL —YET WHILE THE SCALES OF FATE TEETER BACK AND FORTH WITH DIZZYING INCONSISTENCY, A NEW ORDER IS BORN TO CHANGE THE DESTINY OF GENERATIONS TO COME — ITS LEADER, THE FANTASTIC PHENOMENON KNOWN AS THE FIN. IN THE YEAR 1940 ....
IN AN UNDESIGNATED CHANNEL OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN, FAR BELOW THE SURFACE, A LONE SUBMARINE PLOUGHS SLUGGISHLY THROUGH THE NIGHT, CONCENTRATING ON WARTIME MANOEUVERS ....
1

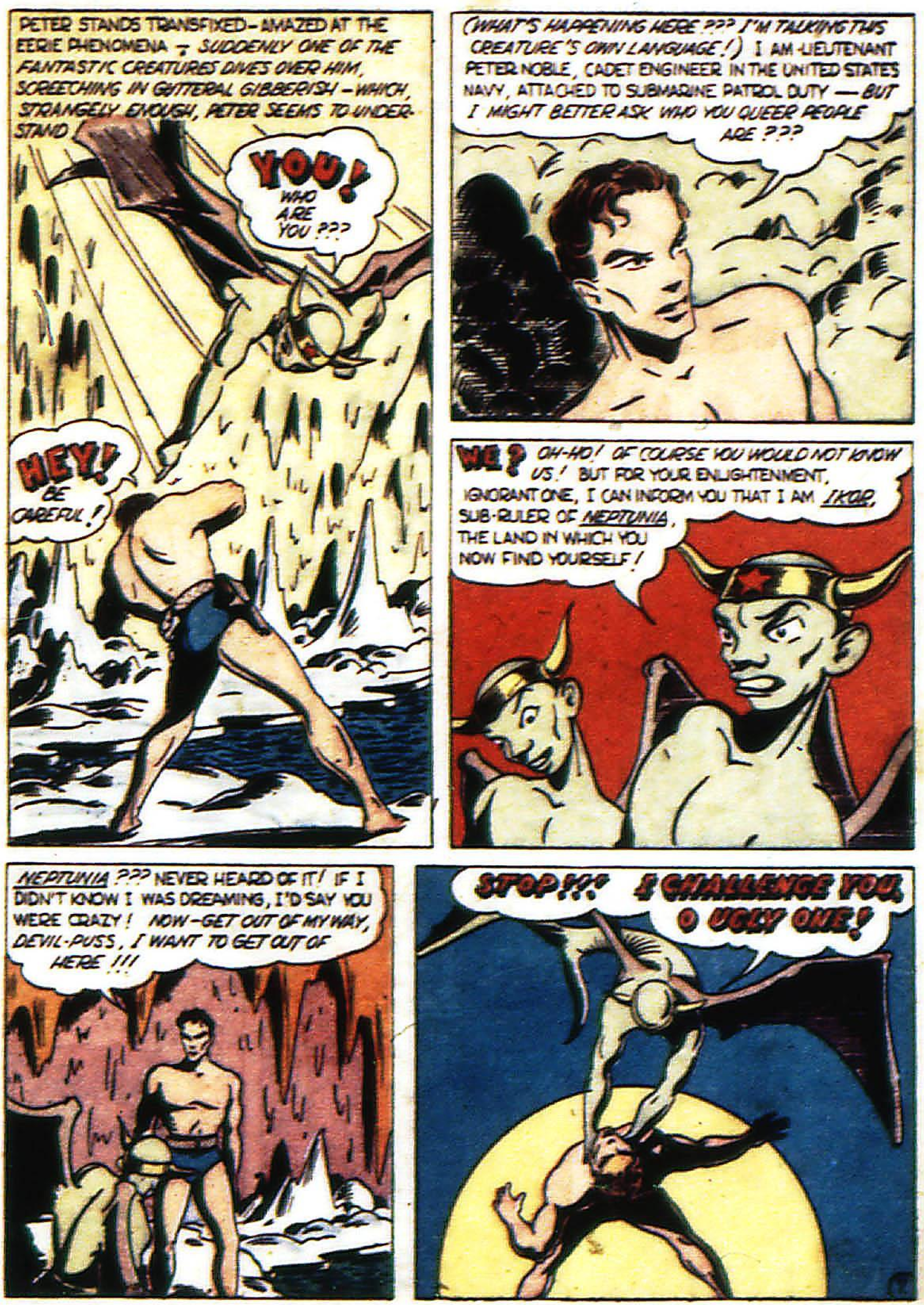

IT'S NOSE BURROWS DOGGEDLY AMONG THE FLORA OF THE SUB-SEA, UNTIL SUDDENLY ......
....AND WITHOUT WARNING, IT CRASHES VIOLENTLY INTO THE REMAINS OF A SUBMERGED DERELICT!
CRASH!
THERE IS A HARROWING RENDING OF STEEL, CRUSHED AND TWISTED, AND IN THE BOWELS OF THE UNDERSEA CRAFT THERE IS TRAGIC CHAOS AS THE TREACHEROUS SEA POURS IN!
ONE MAN ALONE DIVES FOR THE COMPARATIVE SAFETY OF THE TINY TOOL-LOCKER ......
G-GOTTA .....MAKE.... IT!!!
....AND WITH THE SEA AT HIS HEELS, SEALS THE COMPARTMENT!
SLAM!
INSIDE, HE FRANTICALLY REACHES FOR AN ARTIFICIAL-LUNG ......
NO TIME .....TO SAVE THE .... OTHERS! .....GOTTA GET .....
....BUT THE SUBMARINE SUDDENLY GIVES A DYING LURCH, AND THE YOUNG SEAMAN IS HURLED AGAINST A BULKHEAD!
CRACK!
SLOWLY HE SLIPS TO HIS KNEES...... COLLAPSES ON HIS BACK, HEAD PILLOWED ON A STEEL BEAM — A YOUNG CADET ENGINEER, U.S. NAVAL RESERVE, IN A DEATH-LIKE COMA!

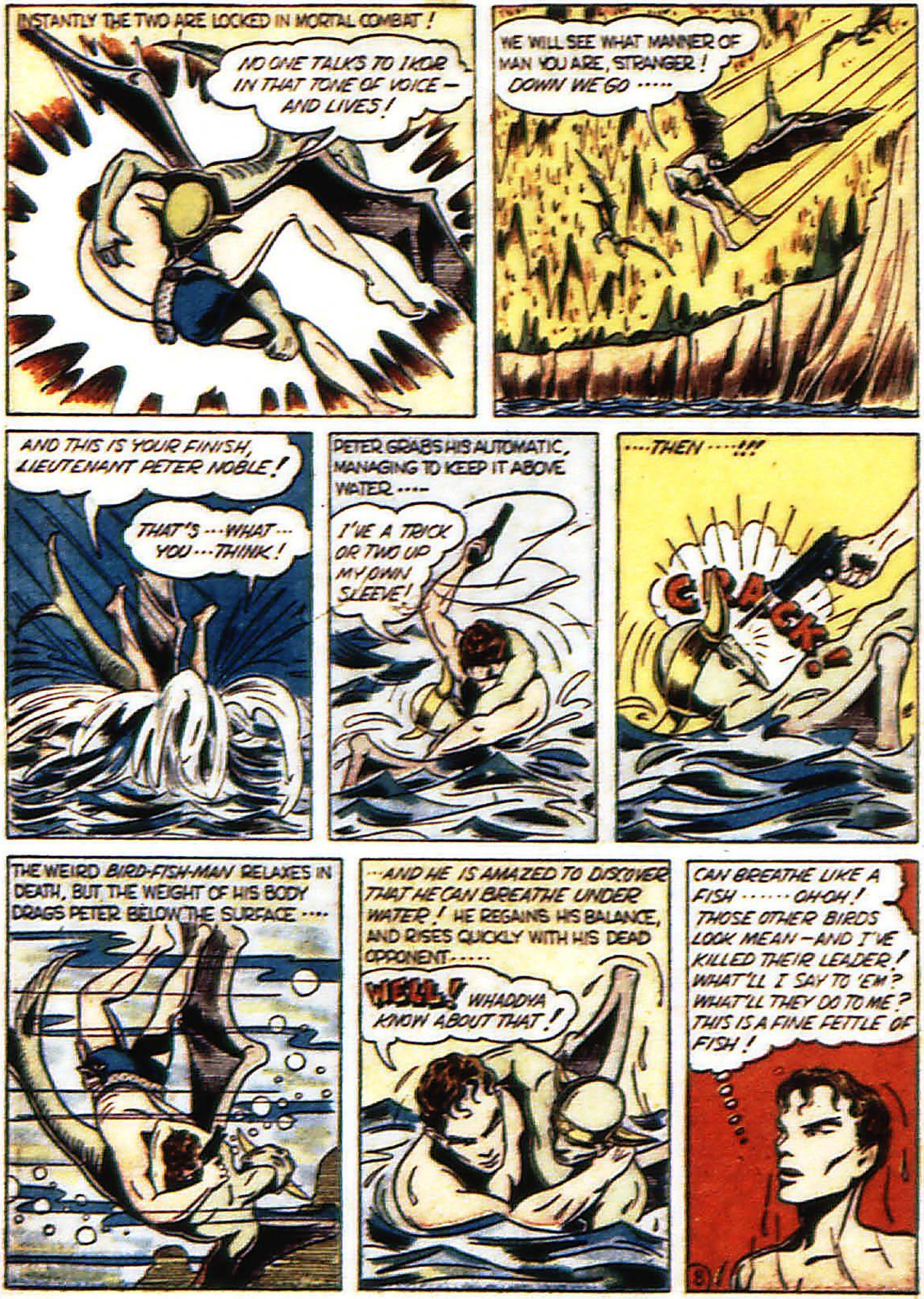

TIME STANDS STILL IN THE STEEL COFFIN BENEATH THE SEA -----AND WHEN THE DAZED ENGINEER REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS HE FINDS HIMSELF CHOKING FOR LACK OF AIR -----
HIS SENSES REELING, HE SUMMONS HIS REMAINING STRENGTH, AND RIPS OPEN A CARTON CONTAINING A RESCUE-LUNG.
IN A FEW MOMENTS HE IS HIMSELF AGAIN, AND RISING TO HIS FEET, HE SLINGS A PORTABLE ACETYLENE TORCH OUTFIT TO HIS BACK ......
..... AND GOES TO WORK ON THE STEEL HULL ....
GOTTA WORK --- FAST!
A FINAL ARC OF BLUE FIRE, AND HE BURSTS THROUGH—INTO A DARK AND MURKY SEA!
THAT DID IT!
QUICKLY, HE DARTS TO A SEALED HATCH ON THE SUBMARINE'S DECK!
NOW ----- TO FREE THE OTHERS!
...AND, IN A FEW MOMENTS, PLUNGES INTO THE DIMLY-LIT INTERIOR
DON'T KNOW HOW LONG WE'VE BEEN DOWN HERE-
-HOPE IT'S NOT TOO —— **OH MY LORD!!!** THEY'RE ALL ...... IT IS TOO LATE! MY FRIENDS, MY PALS! OH, LORD, HAVE MERCY ON 'EM! REST THEIR SOULS IN PEACE!
3

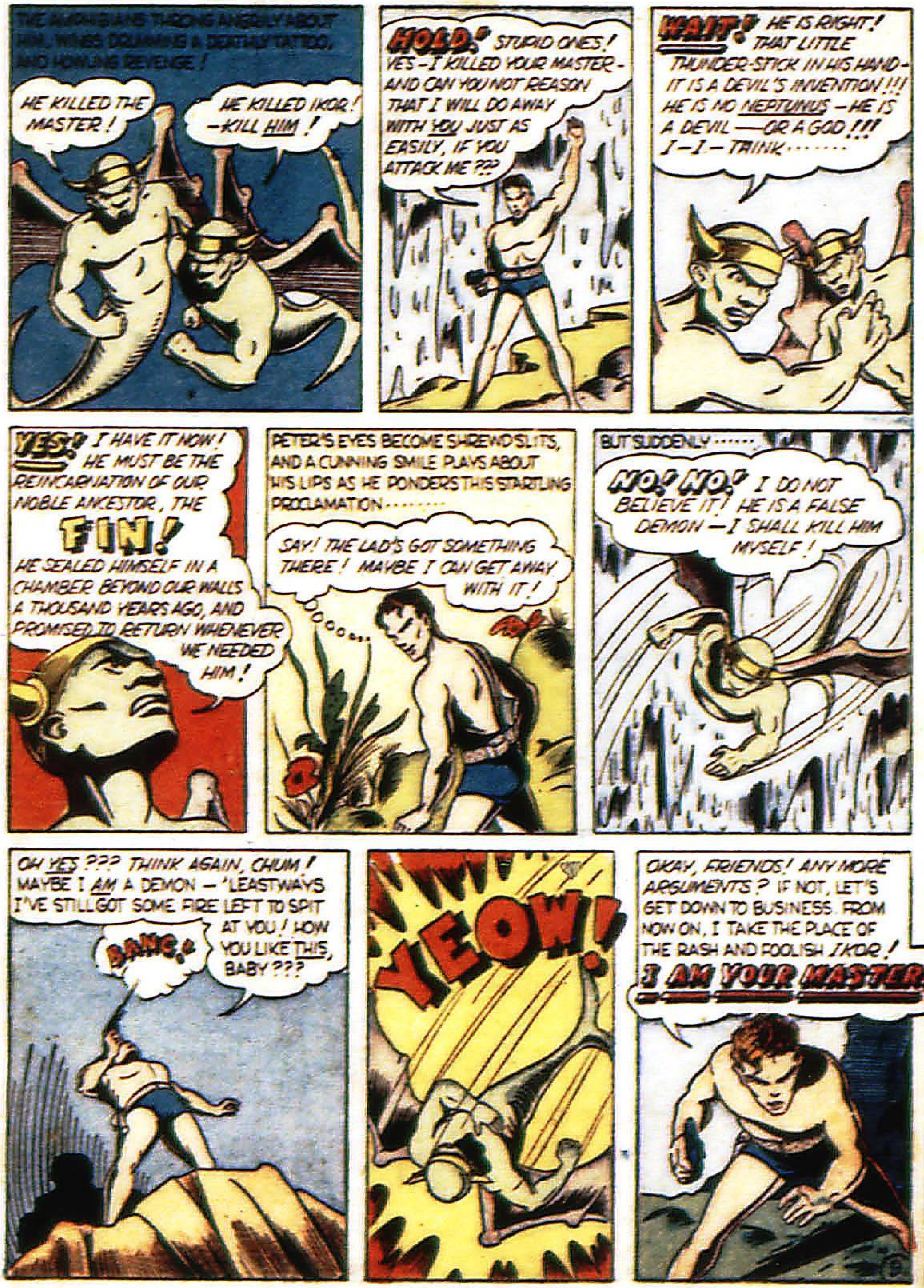

MUST'VE BEEN TRAPPED DOWN HERE FOR HOURS! WHY DIDN'T I SUFFOCATE?
LORD, IT'S SPOOKY! NEVER THOUGHT THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN WOULD BE LIKE THIS! AND IT'S COLD! SAY! WHY DON'T I FLOAT?
WOW! SOMETHING SCREWY ABOUT THIS! CAN'T .... SWIM TO THE .... SURFACE! SOMETHING WEIGHTING ME DOWN!
THE YOUNG SAILOR STRUGGLES VALIANTLY, BUT THE ELEMENTS ARE AGAINST HIM .....
IT'S .... NO USE! CAN'T MAKE IT! HEAVENS, WHAT NOW???
HE RELAXES, AND, EXHAUSTED, SINKS SLOWLY BACK TO THE FLOOR OF THE SEA.
THIS .... MUST BE .... THE END! CAN'T STAY HERE .... FOREVER .....
BUT, AS NOTHING HAPPENS TO HIM WHILE LYING ON THE SHOAL, HE RALLIES—
OH, WELL, NOTHING TO BE GAINED BY STAYING HERE! HELLO? WHAT'S THIS??? AIR-BUBBLES FROM A GROTTO!
AIR! AT NEARLY TWO THOUSAND FEET! THAT MEANS A PASSAGE TO THE SURFACE .... OR IS IT—? I'D BETTER INVESTIGATE .... CAN'T LOSE ANYTHING!
HE DARTS INTO THE BLACK ENTRANCE, PEERING CAUTIOUSLY INTO EVERY CORNER ....
MAY BE A MISTAKE .... BUT .... HOLD ON!!! ANOTHER PASSAGE! LEFT TURN, BROTHER NOBLE!

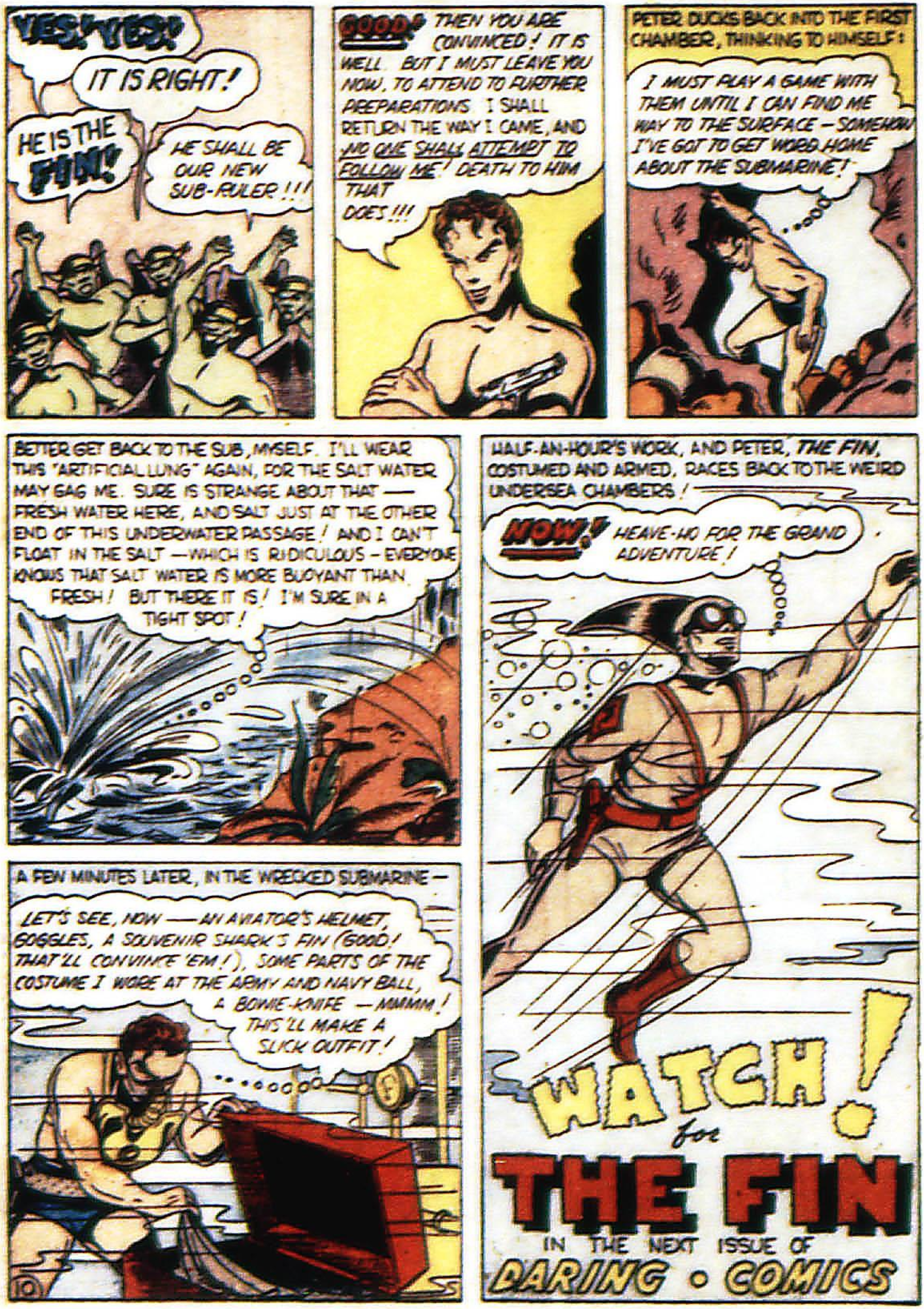

HE STREAKS DOWN A LONG DARK CORRIDOR TOWARD WHAT APPEARS TO BE A DIMLY-LIT EXIT, AND IS AMAZED AT THE SPEED WITH WHICH HE SWIMS SO EASILY!
SURE IS UNCANNY! CAN'T EVEN FEEL THE PRESSURE!
SUDDENLY .... AS HE GAINS THE EXIT .... HE IS SKY-ROCKETTED UPWARDS IN A ROARING WHIRLPOOL!
AND BREAKS THE SURFACE WITH A LOUD SPLASH!
DAZED, HE SHAKES THE WATER FROM HIS EYES —TO FIND HIMSELF IN A GREAT CAVERNOUS CHAMBER!
GREAT GUNS! THIS IS SOME FANTASTIC DREAM — A NIGHTMARE! WHAT NEXT???
STRIKING OUT; IN A FEW SECONDS HE REACHES A NATURAL SHELF SURROUNDING THE INSIDE OF THE HUGE ROOM
WELL, LT. PETER NOBLE, YOU'RE IN A FINE SPOT NOW! WHAT A WEIRD PLACE! MUST BE ILLUMINATED BY THE PHOSPHORESCENT ROCKS - NO OUTLET TO DAYLIGHT THAT I CAN SEE!

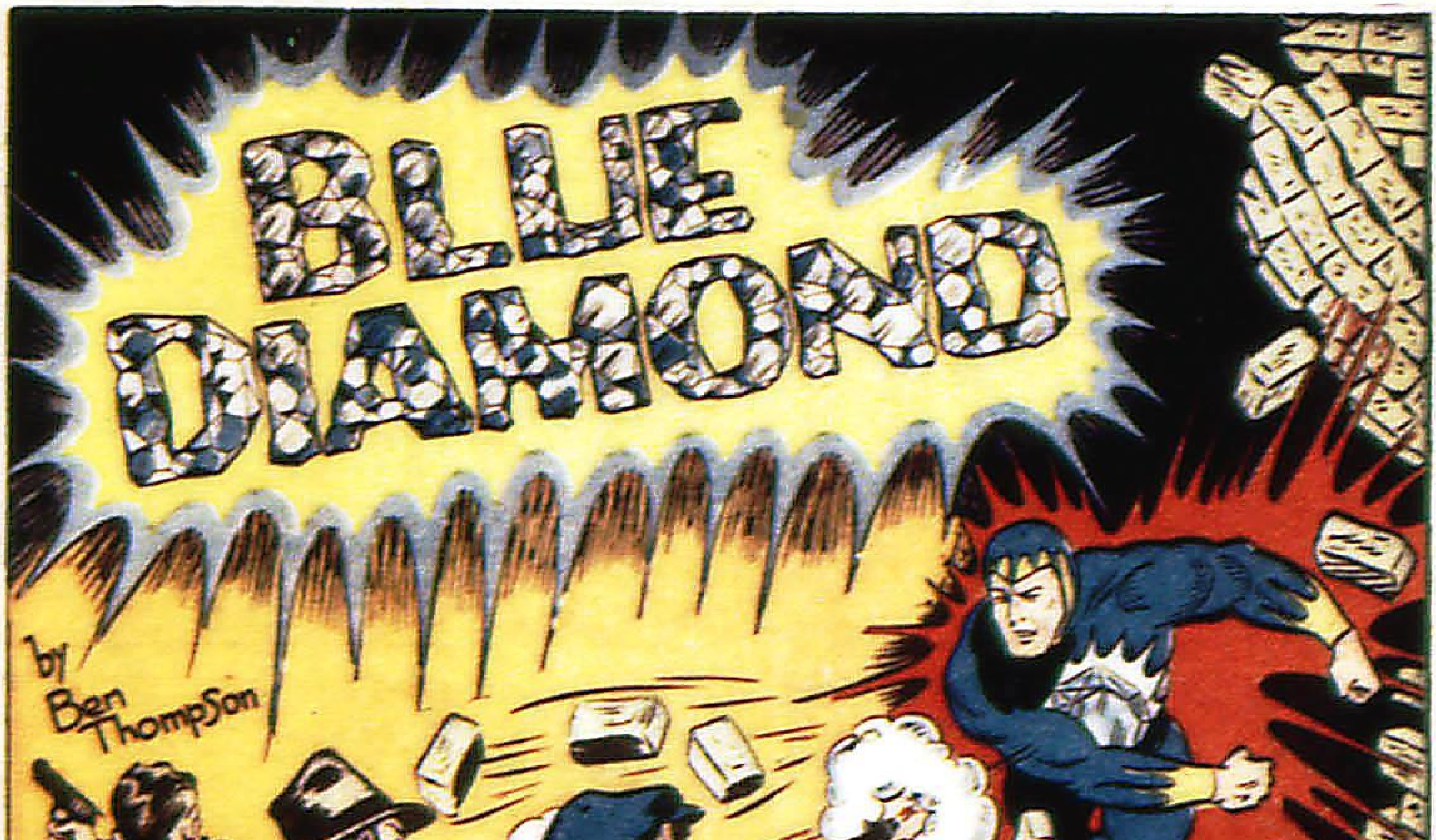

LEAVING HIS 'ESCAPE LUNG' ON A ROCK, PETER NOBLE MAKES A TOUR OF THE CAVERN — AND FINDS NO OUTLET SAVE THE ONE BY WHICH HE ENTERED
THIS IS A PRETTY MESS! TRAPPED IN AN UNDERSEA PRISON! FUNNY THING, TOO — THIS IS FRESH WATER, NOT SALT. CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! THERE'S AIR IN THIS VAULT, BUT WHERE DOES IT COME FROM???
HUNGER STEALS OVER HIM, AND AS HE CHEWS ON LEAVES OF THE STRANGE VEGETATION, HE NOTICES........
EDIBLE, IF NOT EXACTLY DELECTABLE! SAY! WHAT'S THIS??? THESE ROCKS ARE COLD! THERE'S AIR COMING THROUGH THE CRACKS! I WONDER.....?
PETER DIVES BACK THROUGH THE UNDERWATER PASSAGE TO THE WRECKED SUBMARINE, AND RETURNS WITH AN AUTOMATIC, A HAND-DRILL AND SINGLE-JACK
....IF I CAN BREAK THROUGH!
AND AFTER TWO HOURS' WORK.....
CRASH!
FINDS HIMSELF ON A HIGH PRECIPICE, OVERLOOKING A DEEP BLACK POOL IN ANOTHER GREAT CHAMBER!!! THE THIN AIR IS FILLED WITH THE WHIRRING OF MANY WINGS, AS WEIRD BIRDS SOAR MADLY IN PANIC AT HIS ENTRANCE!!!
YEOWRRRRR!
EEEEEEK!
WOW! NOW I KNOW I'M DREAMING! GOOD LORD — WHAT MANNER OF BIRDS ARE THOSE CREATURES?


PETER STANDS TRANSFIXED—AMAZED AT THE EERIE PHENOMENA ; SUDDENLY ONE OF THE FANTASTIC CREATURES DIVES OVER HIM, SCREECHING IN GUTTERAL GIBBERISH —WHICH, STRANGELY ENOUGH, PETER SEEMS TO UNDERSTAND !
YOU! WHO ARE YOU ???
HEY! BE CAREFUL!
(WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE ??? I'M TALKING THIS CREATURE'S OWN LANGUAGE!) I AM LIEUTENANT PETER NOBLE, CADET ENGINEER IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY, ATTACHED TO SUBMARINE PATROL DUTY — BUT I MIGHT BETTER ASK WHO YOU QUEER PEOPLE ARE ???
WE? OH-HO! OF COURSE YOU WOULD NOT KNOW US! BUT FOR YOUR ENLIGHTENMENT, IGNORANT ONE, I CAN INFORM YOU THAT I AM IKOR, SUB-RULER OF NEPTUNIA, THE LAND IN WHICH YOU NOW FIND YOURSELF!
NEPTUNIA ??? NEVER HEARD OF IT! IF I DIDN'T KNOW I WAS DREAMING, I'D SAY YOU WERE CRAZY! NOW—GET OUT OF MY WAY, DEVIL-PUSS, I WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE !!!
STOP!!! I CHALLENGE YOU, O UGLY ONE!

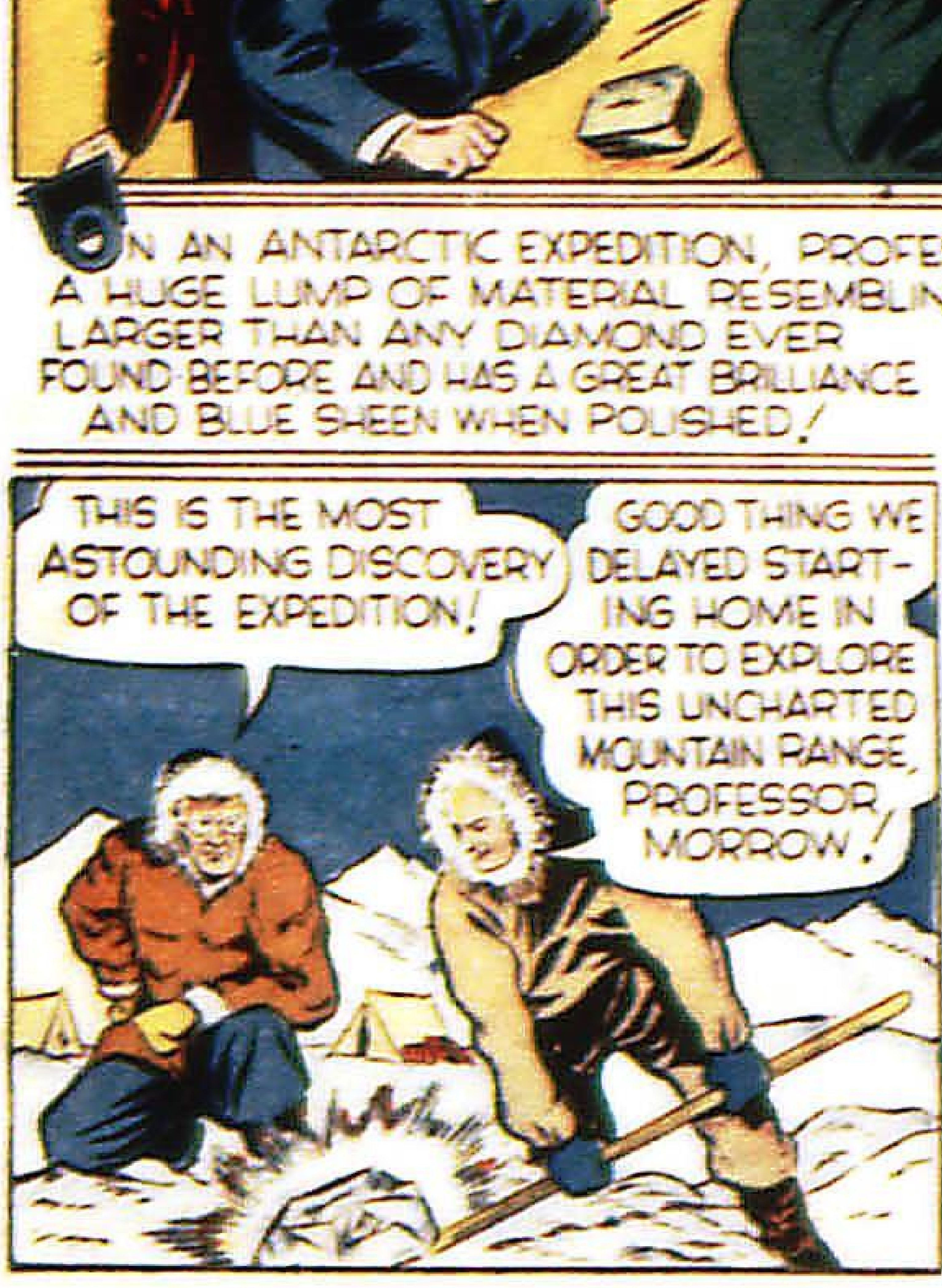

INSTANTLY THE TWO ARE LOCKED IN MORTAL COMBAT!
NO ONE TALKS TO IKOR IN THAT TONE OF VOICE — AND LIVES!
WE WILL SEE WHAT MANNER OF MAN YOU ARE, STRANGER! DOWN WE GO .....
AND THIS IS YOUR FINISH, LIEUTENANT PETER NOBLE!
THAT'S ... WHAT ... YOU ... THINK!
PETER GRABS HIS AUTOMATIC, MANAGING TO KEEP IT ABOVE WATER ....
I'VE A TRICK OR TWO UP MY OWN SLEEVE!
.... THEN ....!!!
CRACK!
THE WEIRD BIRD-FISH-MAN RELAXES IN DEATH, BUT THE WEIGHT OF HIS BODY DRAGS PETER BELOW THE SURFACE ....
... AND HE IS AMAZED TO DISCOVER THAT HE CAN BREATHE UNDER WATER! HE REGAINS HIS BALANCE, AND RISES QUICKLY WITH HIS DEAD OPPONENT .....
WELL! WHADDYA KNOW ABOUT THAT!
CAN BREATHE LIKE A FISH ...... OH-OH! THOSE OTHER BIRDS LOOK MEAN — AND I'VE KILLED THEIR LEADER! WHAT'LL I SAY TO 'EM? WHAT'LL THEY DO TO ME? THIS IS A FINE FETTLE OF FISH!
8


THE AMPHIBIANS THRONG ANGRILY ABOUT HIM, WINGS DRUMMING A DEATHLY TATTOO, AND HOWLING REVENGE!
HE KILLED THE MASTER!
HE KILLED IKOR! -KILL HIM!
HOLD! STUPID ONES! YES-I KILLED YOUR MASTER-AND CAN YOU NOT REASON THAT I WILL DO AWAY WITH YOU JUST AS EASILY, IF YOU ATTACK ME???
WAIT! HE IS RIGHT! THAT LITTLE THUNDER-STICK IN HIS HAND-IT IS A DEVIL'S INVENTION!!! HE IS NO NEPTUNUS-HE IS A DEVIL—OR A GOD!!! I-I-THINK.......
YES! I HAVE IT NOW! HE MUST BE THE REINCARNATION OF OUR NOBLE ANCESTOR, THE FIN! HE SEALED HIMSELF IN A CHAMBER BEYOND OUR WALLS A THOUSAND YEARS AGO, AND PROMISED TO RETURN WHENEVER WE NEEDED HIM!
PETER'S EYES BECOME SHREWD SLITS, AND A CUNNING SMILE PLAYS ABOUT HIS LIPS AS HE PONDERS THIS STARTLING PROCLAMATION.........
SAY! THE LAD'S GOT SOMETHING THERE! MAYBE I CAN GET AWAY WITH IT!
BUT SUDDENLY.......
NO! NO! I DO NOT BELIEVE IT! HE IS A FALSE DEMON-I SHALL KILL HIM MYSELF!
OH YES??? THINK AGAIN, CHUM! MAYBE I AM A DEMON-'LEASTWAYS I'VE STILL GOT SOME FIRE LEFT TO SPIT AT YOU! HOW YOU LIKE THIS, BABY???
BANG!
YEOW!
OKAY, FRIENDS! ANY MORE ARGUMENTS? IF NOT, LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS. FROM NOW ON, I TAKE THE PLACE OF THE RASH AND FOOLISH IKOR! I AM YOUR MASTER!

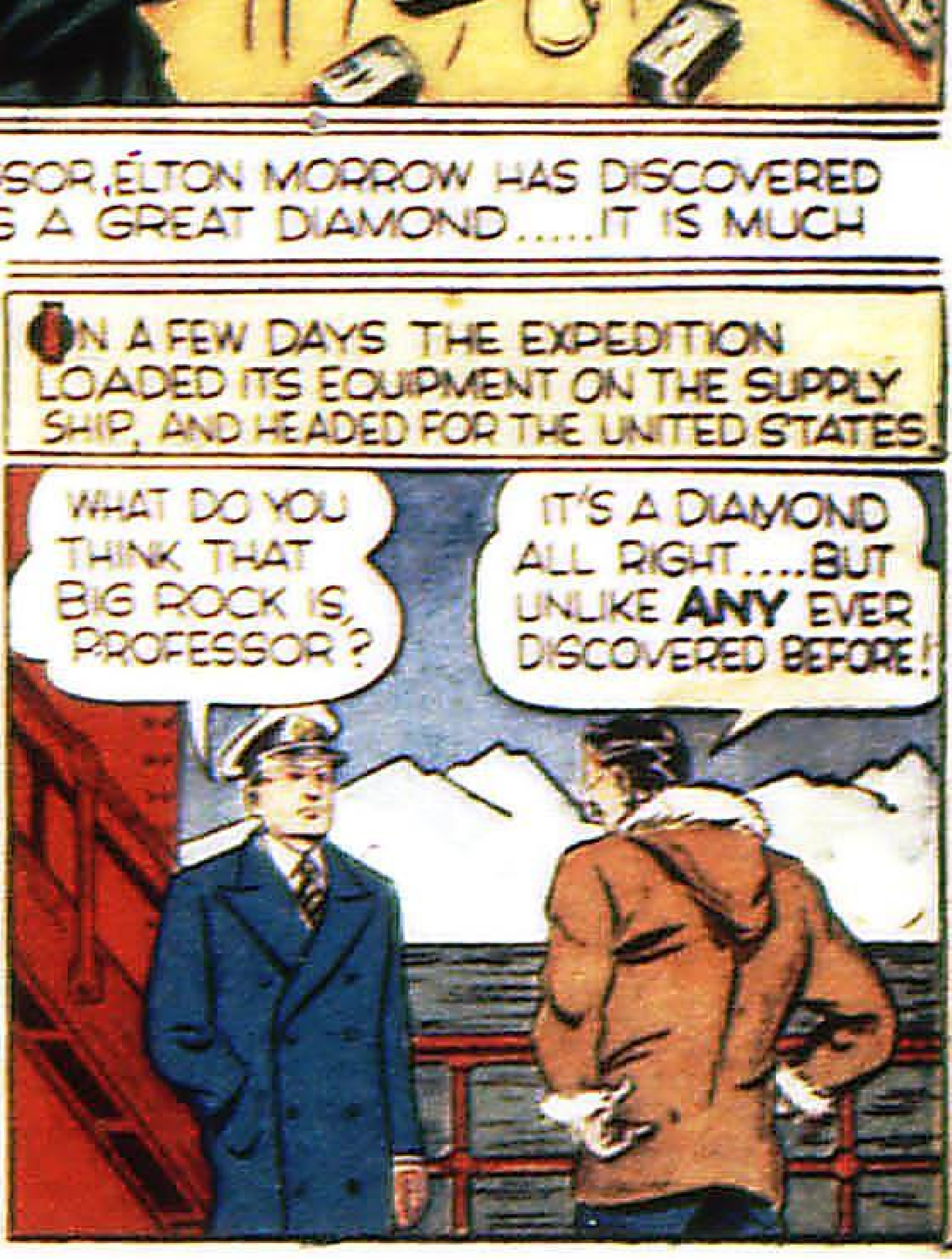

YES! YES!
IT IS RIGHT!
HE IS THE FIN!
HE SHALL BE OUR NEW SUB-RULER!!!
GOOD! THEN YOU ARE CONVINCED! IT IS WELL. BUT I MUST LEAVE YOU NOW, TO ATTEND TO FURTHER PREPARATIONS. I SHALL RETURN THE WAY I CAME, AND NO ONE SHALL ATTEMPT TO FOLLOW ME! DEATH TO HIM THAT DOES!!!
PETER DUCKS BACK INTO THE FIRST CHAMBER, THINKING TO HIMSELF:
I MUST PLAY A GAME WITH THEM UNTIL I CAN FIND ME WAY TO THE SURFACE — SOMEHOW I'VE GOT TO GET WORD HOME ABOUT THE SUBMARINE!
BETTER GET BACK TO THE SUB, MYSELF. I'LL WEAR THIS "ARTIFICIAL LUNG" AGAIN, FOR THE SALT WATER MAY GAG ME. SURE IS STRANGE ABOUT THAT — FRESH WATER HERE, AND SALT JUST AT THE OTHER END OF THIS UNDERWATER PASSAGE! AND I CAN'T FLOAT IN THE SALT — WHICH IS RIDICULOUS — EVERYONE KNOWS THAT SALT WATER IS MORE BUOYANT THAN FRESH! BUT THERE IT IS! I'M SURE IN A TIGHT SPOT!
A FEW MINUTES LATER, IN THE WRECKED SUBMARINE —
LET'S SEE, NOW — AN AVIATOR'S HELMET, GOGGLES, A SOUVENIR SHARK'S FIN (GOOD! THAT'LL CONVINCE 'EM!), SOME PARTS OF THE COSTUME I WORE AT THE ARMY AND NAVY BALL, A BOWIE-KNIFE — MMMM! THIS'LL MAKE A SLICK OUTFIT!
10
HALF-AN-HOUR'S WORK, AND PETER, THE FIN, COSTUMED AND ARMED, RACES BACK TO THE WEIRD UNDERSEA CHAMBERS!
NOW! HEAVE-HO FOR THE GRAND ADVENTURE!
WATCH! for THE FIN IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF DARING • COMICS

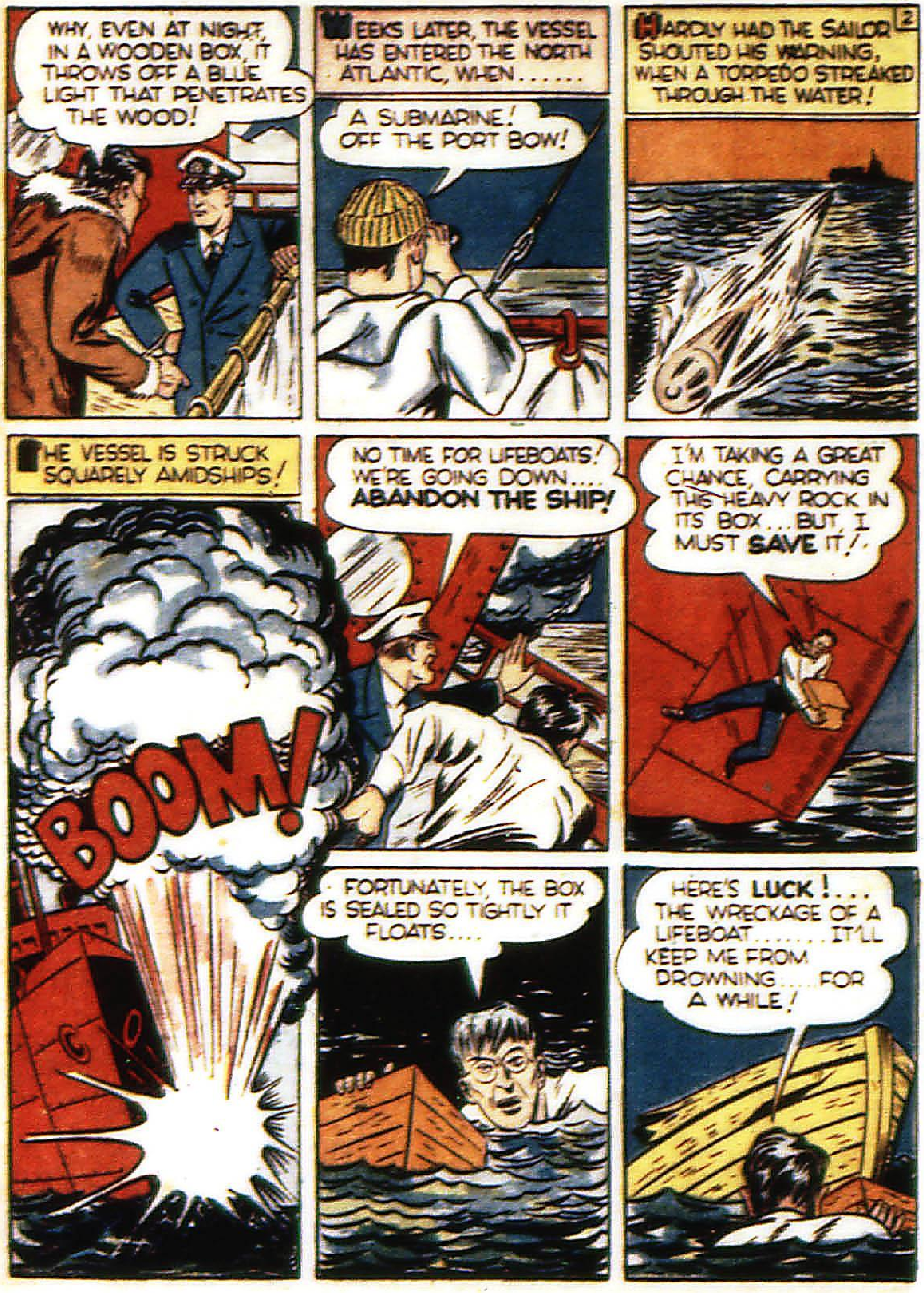

BLUE DIAMOND
by Ben Thompson

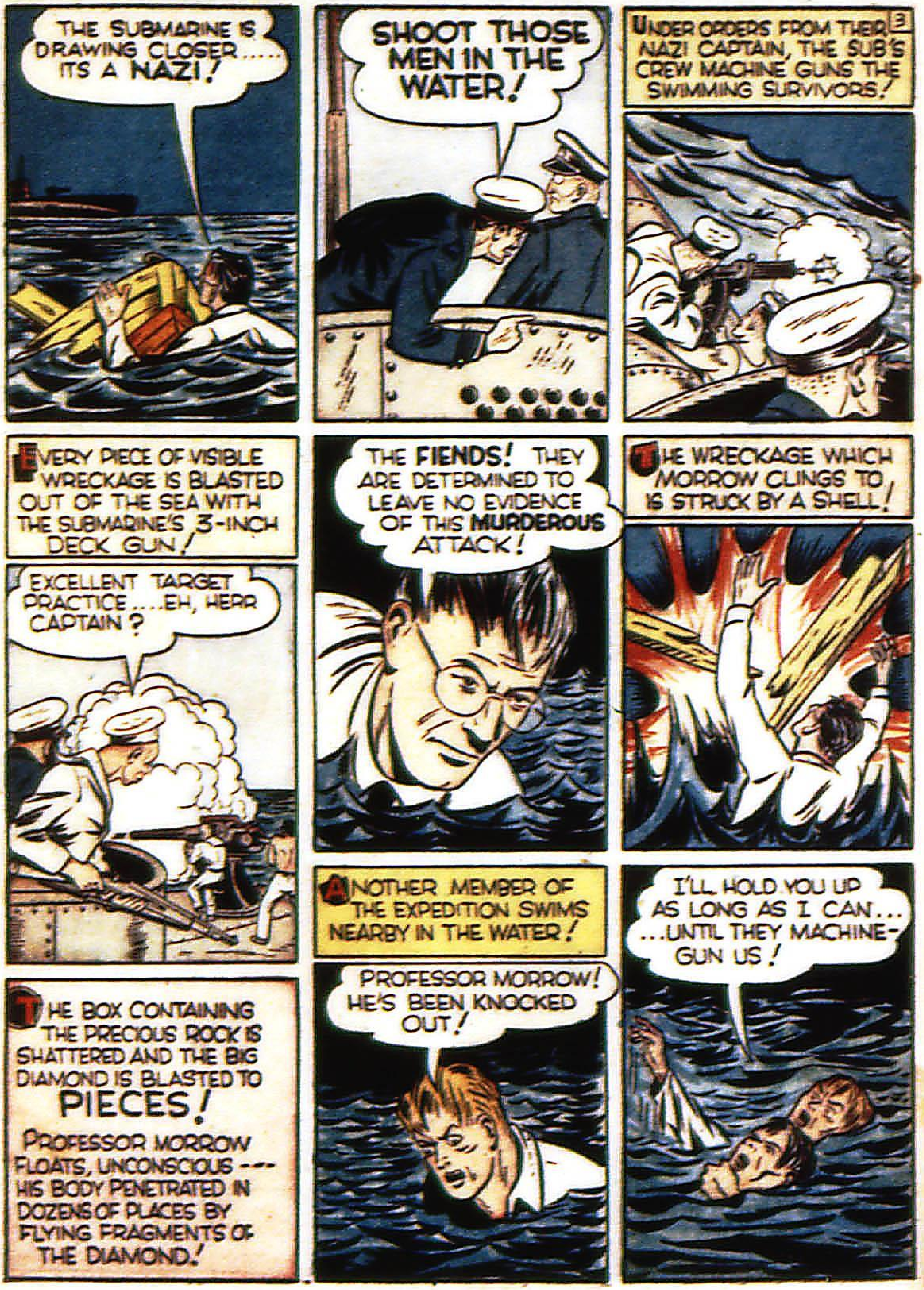
ON AN ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION, PROFESSOR ELTON MORROW HAS DISCOVERED A HUGE LUMP OF MATERIAL RESEMBLING A GREAT DIAMOND.....IT IS MUCH LARGER THAN ANY DIAMOND EVER FOUND BEFORE AND HAS A GREAT BRILLIANCE AND BLUE SHEEN WHEN POLISHED!

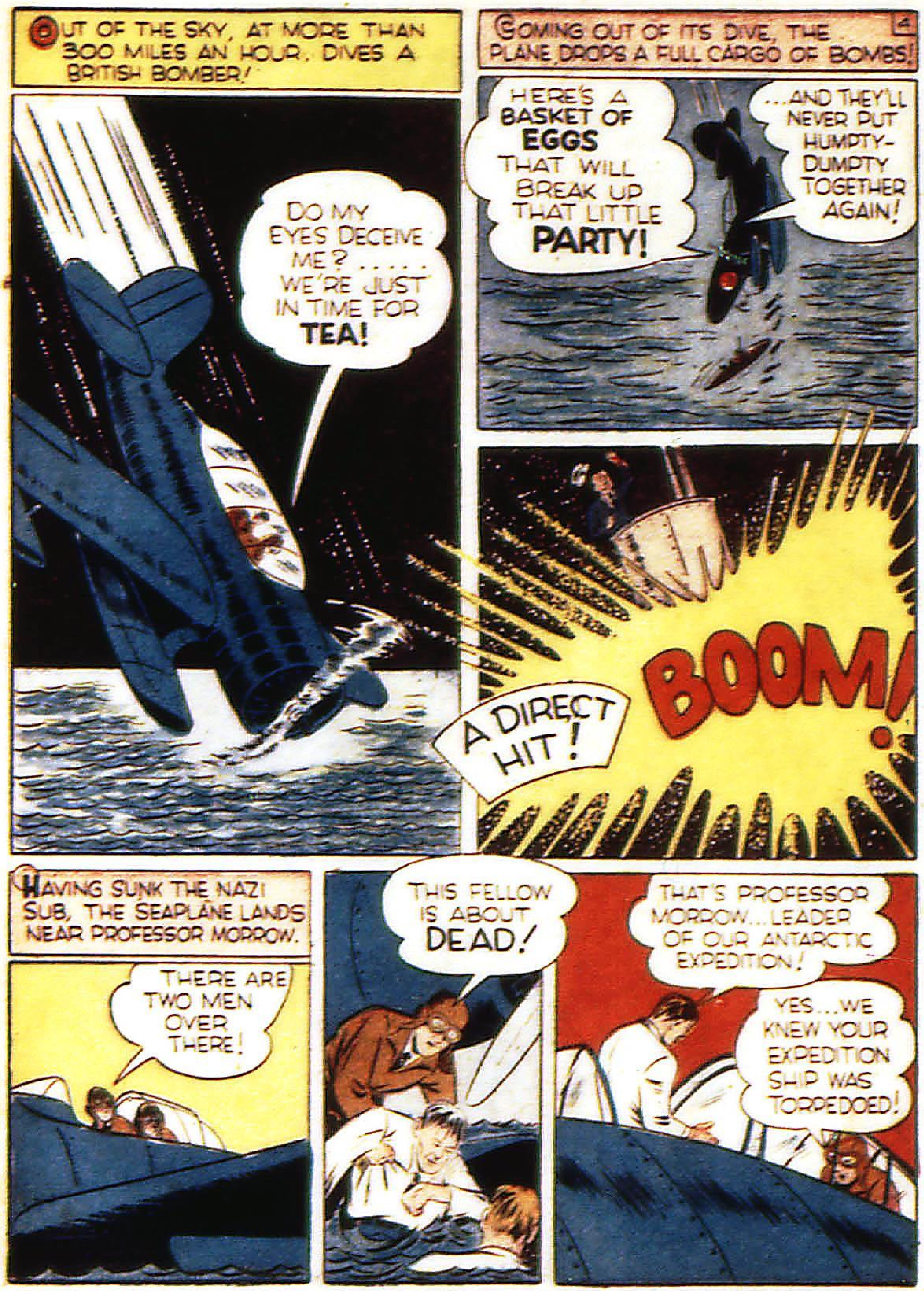

THIS IS THE MOST ASTOUNDING DISCOVERY OF THE EXPEDITION!
GOOD THING WE DELAYED STARTING HOME IN ORDER TO EXPLORE THIS UNCHARTED MOUNTAIN RANGE, PROFESSOR MORROW!

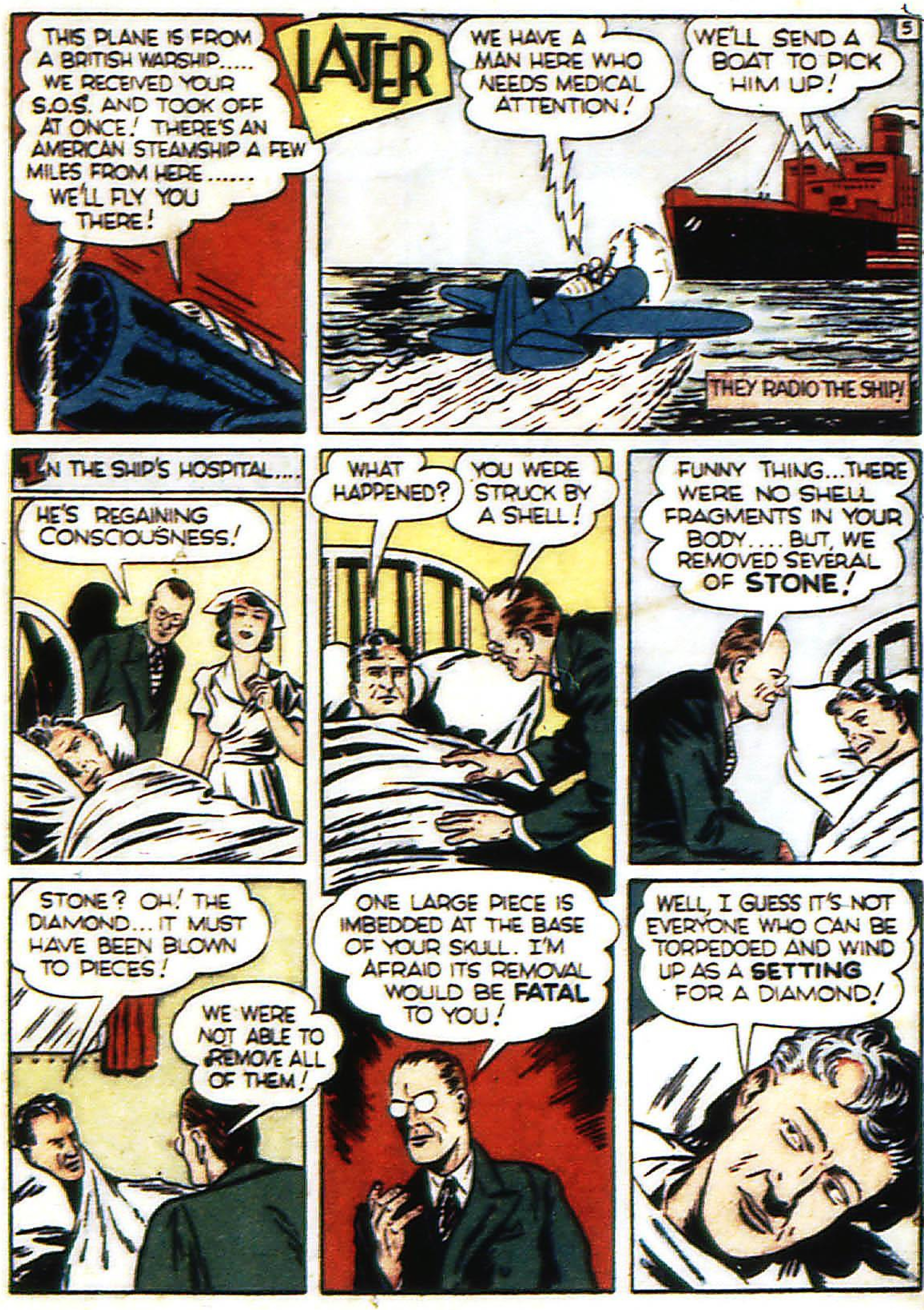
IN A FEW DAYS THE EXPEDITION LOADED ITS EQUIPMENT ON THE SUPPLY SHIP, AND HEADED FOR THE UNITED STATES.

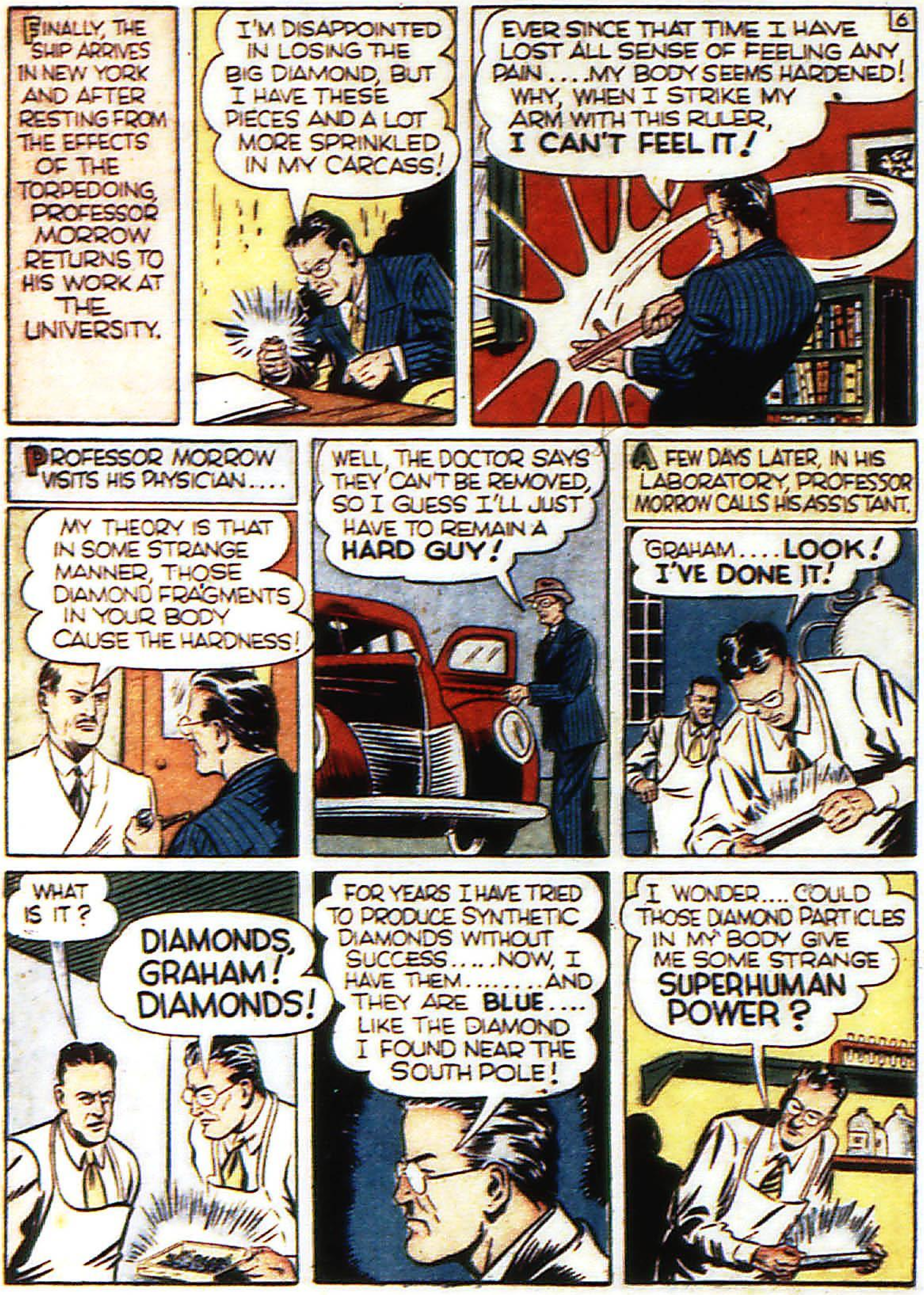

WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT BIG ROCK IS, PROFESSOR?
IT'S A DIAMOND ALL RIGHT....BUT UNLIKE ANY EVER DISCOVERED BEFORE!

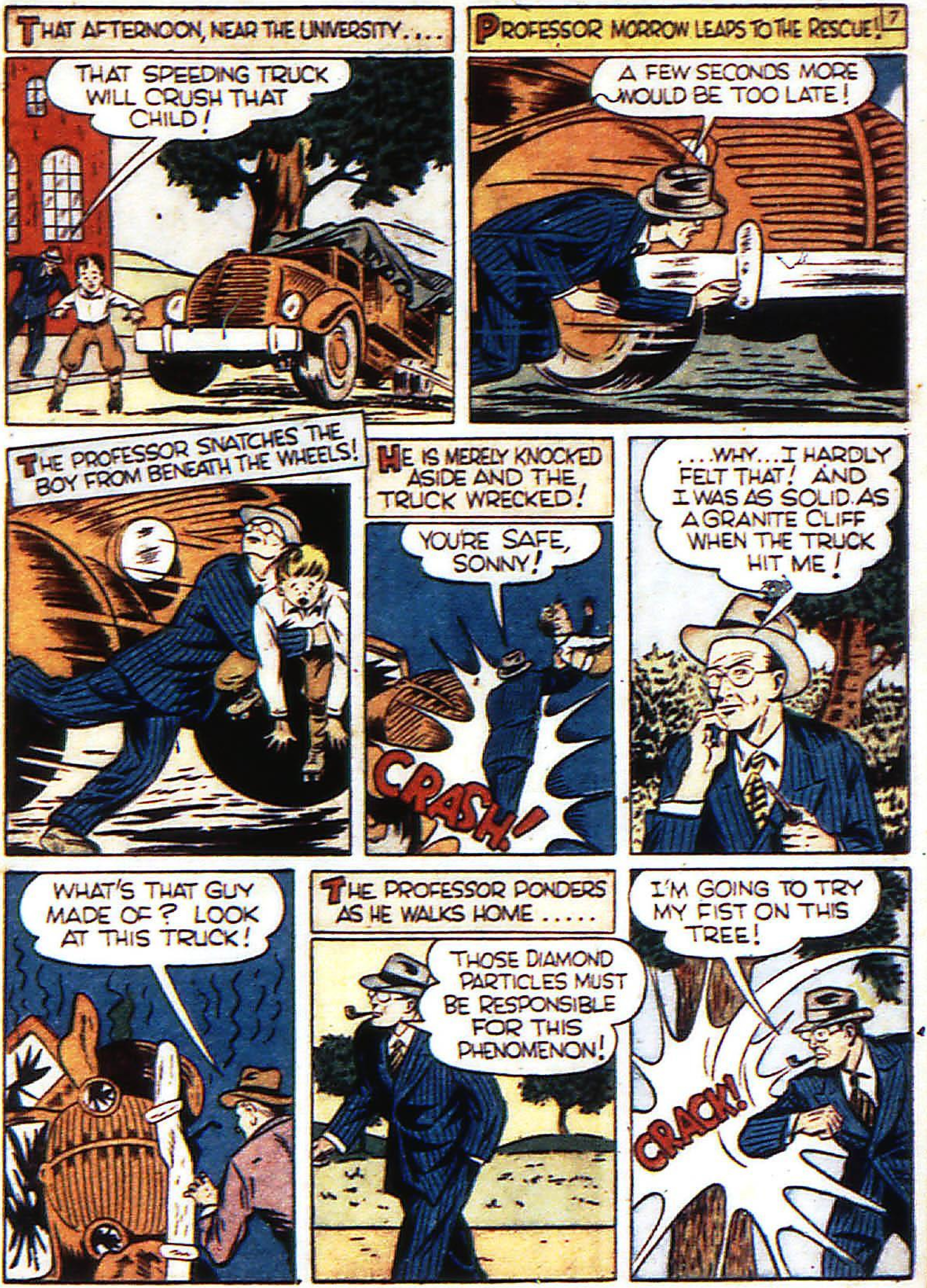

WHY, EVEN AT NIGHT, IN A WOODEN BOX, IT THROWS OFF A BLUE LIGHT THAT PENETRATES THE WOOD!
WEEKS LATER, THE VESSEL HAS ENTERED THE NORTH ATLANTIC, WHEN.......
A SUBMARINE! OFF THE PORT BOW!
2
HARDLY HAD THE SAILOR SHOUTED HIS WARNING, WHEN A TORPEDO STREAKED THROUGH THE WATER!
THE VESSEL IS STRUCK SQUARELY AMIDSHIPS!
BOOM!
NO TIME FOR LIFEBOATS! WE'RE GOING DOWN.... **ABANDON THE SHIP!**
I'M TAKING A GREAT CHANCE, CARRYING THIS HEAVY ROCK IN ITS BOX...BUT, I MUST **SAVE** IT!
FORTUNATELY, THE BOX IS SEALED SO TIGHTLY IT FLOATS....
HERE'S **LUCK**!... THE WRECKAGE OF A LIFEBOAT.......IT'LL KEEP ME FROM DROWNING.....FOR A WHILE!

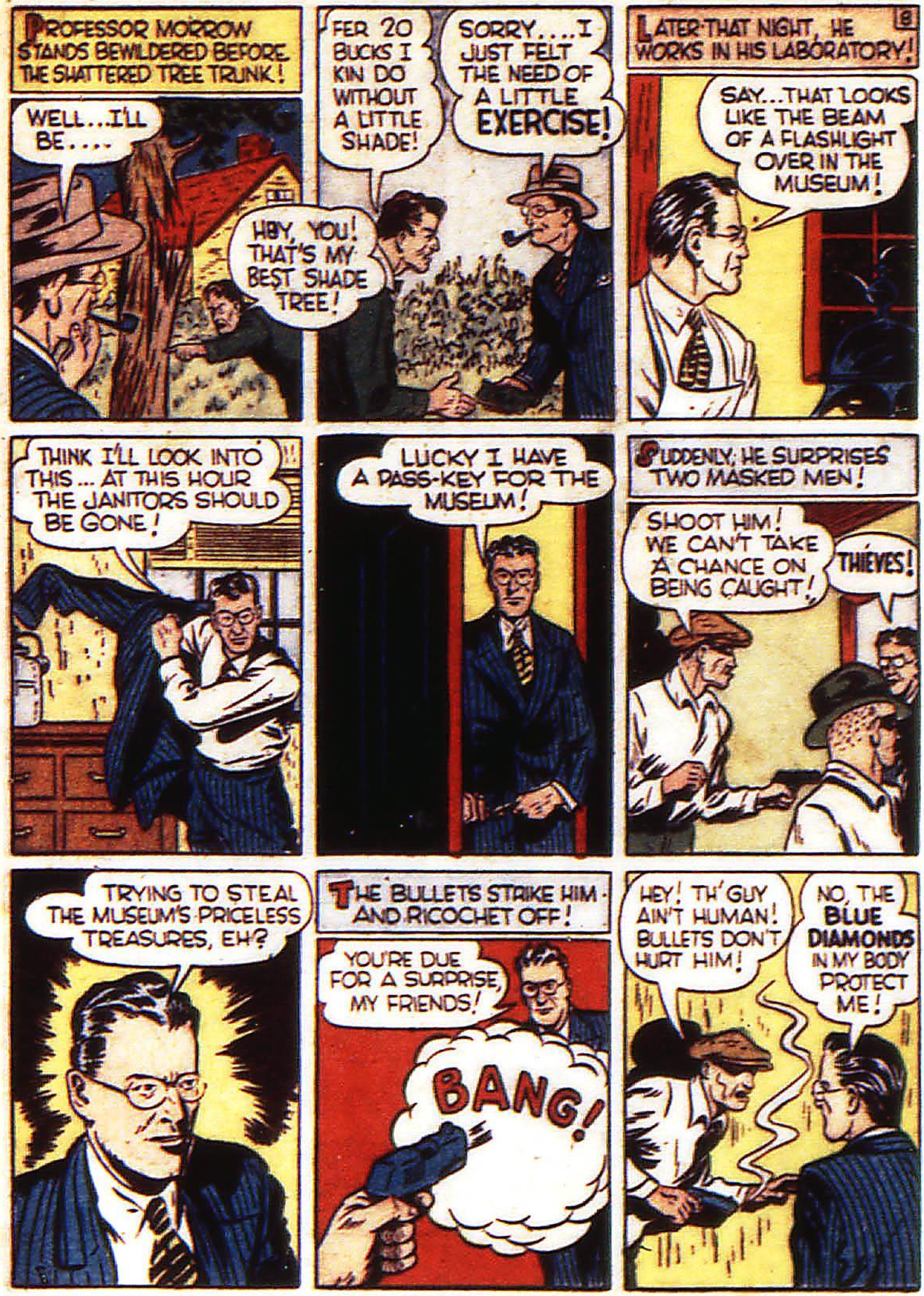

THE SUBMARINE IS DRAWING CLOSER...... ITS A NAZI!
SHOOT THOSE MEN IN THE WATER!
3
UNDER ORDERS FROM THEIR NAZI CAPTAIN, THE SUB'S CREW MACHINE GUNS THE SWIMMING SURVIVORS!
EVERY PIECE OF VISIBLE WRECKAGE IS BLASTED OUT OF THE SEA WITH THE SUBMARINE'S 3-INCH DECK GUN!
EXCELLENT TARGET PRACTICE....EH, HERR CAPTAIN?
THE FIENDS! THEY ARE DETERMINED TO LEAVE NO EVIDENCE OF THIS MURDEROUS ATTACK!
THE WRECKAGE WHICH MORROW CLINGS TO, IS STRUCK BY A SHELL!
THE BOX CONTAINING THE PRECIOUS ROCK IS SHATTERED AND THE BIG DIAMOND IS BLASTED TO PIECES! PROFESSOR MORROW FLOATS, UNCONSCIOUS --- HIS BODY PENETRATED IN DOZENS OF PLACES BY FLYING FRAGMENTS OF THE DIAMOND!
ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE EXPEDITION SWIMS NEARBY IN THE WATER!
PROFESSOR MORROW! HE'S BEEN KNOCKED OUT!
I'LL HOLD YOU UP AS LONG AS I CAN... ...UNTIL THEY MACHINE-GUN US!

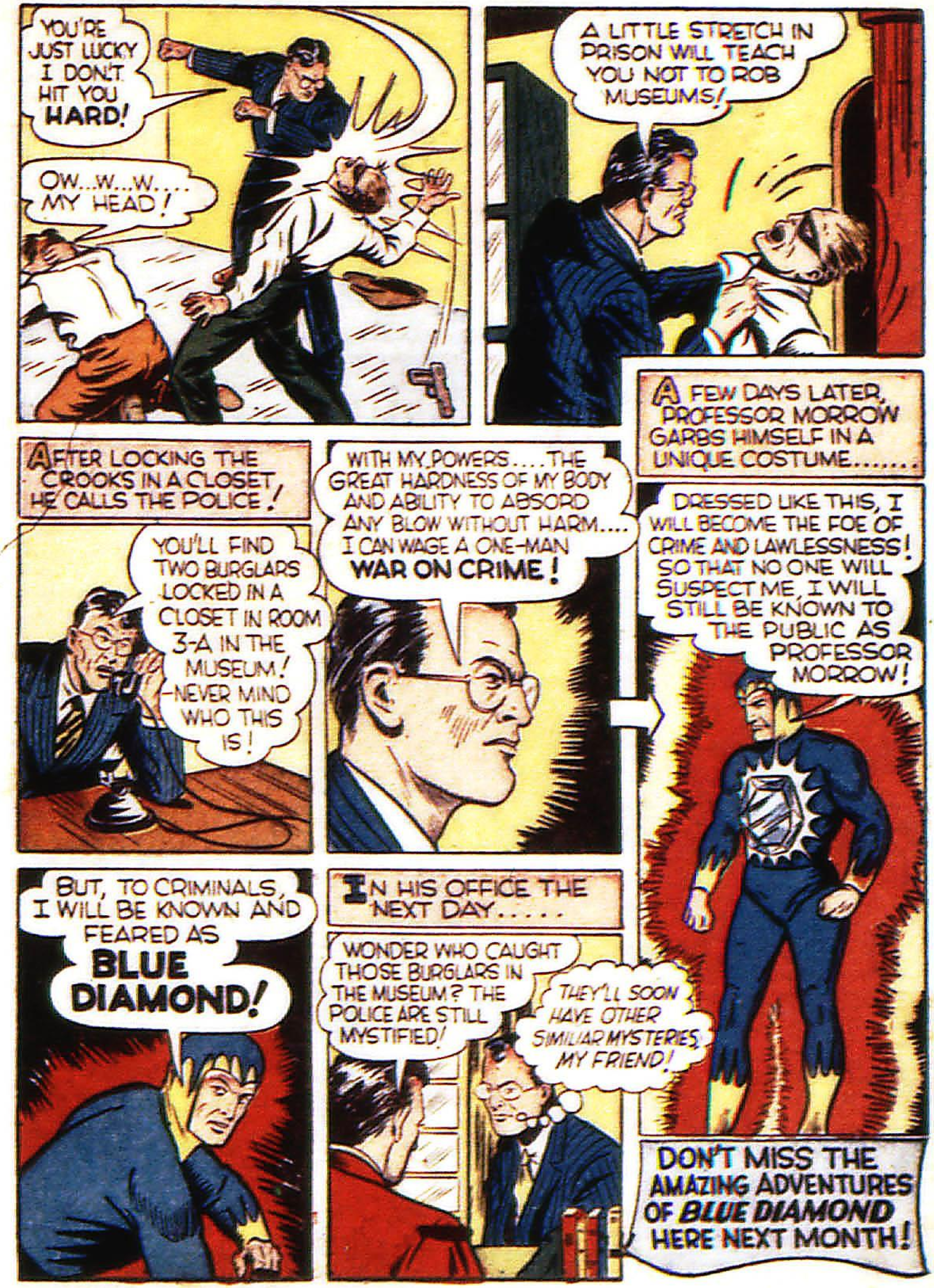

OUT OF THE SKY, AT MORE THAN 300 MILES AN HOUR, DIVES A BRITISH BOMBER!
DO MY EYES DECEIVE ME? ...... WE'RE JUST IN TIME FOR TEA!
COMING OUT OF ITS DIVE, THE PLANE DROPS A FULL CARGO OF BOMBS!
4
HERE'S A BASKET OF EGGS THAT WILL BREAK UP THAT LITTLE PARTY!
...AND THEY'LL NEVER PUT HUMPTY-DUMPTY TOGETHER AGAIN!
BOOM!
A DIRECT HIT!
HAVING SUNK THE NAZI SUB, THE SEAPLANE LANDS NEAR PROFESSOR MORROW.
THERE ARE TWO MEN OVER THERE!
THIS FELLOW IS ABOUT DEAD!
THAT'S PROFESSOR MORROW... LEADER OF OUR ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION!
YES...WE KNEW YOUR EXPEDITION SHIP WAS TORPEDOED!


THIS PLANE IS FROM A BRITISH WARSHIP..... WE RECEIVED YOUR S.O.S. AND TOOK OFF AT ONCE! THERE'S AN AMERICAN STEAMSHIP A FEW MILES FROM HERE...... WE'LL FLY YOU THERE!
LATER
WE HAVE A MAN HERE WHO NEEDS MEDICAL ATTENTION!
WE'LL SEND A BOAT TO PICK HIM UP!
THEY RADIO THE SHIP!
IN THE SHIP'S HOSPITAL....
HE'S REGAINING CONSCIOUSNESS!
WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU WERE STRUCK BY A SHELL!
FUNNY THING...THERE WERE NO SHELL FRAGMENTS IN YOUR BODY.... BUT, WE REMOVED SEVERAL OF STONE!
STONE? OH! THE DIAMOND... IT MUST HAVE BEEN BLOWN TO PIECES!
WE WERE NOT ABLE TO REMOVE ALL OF THEM!
ONE LARGE PIECE IS IMBEDDED AT THE BASE OF YOUR SKULL. I'M AFRAID ITS REMOVAL WOULD BE FATAL TO YOU!
WELL, I GUESS IT'S NOT EVERYONE WHO CAN BE TORPEDOED AND WIND UP AS A SETTING FOR A DIAMOND!


FINALLY, THE SHIP ARRIVES IN NEW YORK AND AFTER RESTING FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE TORPEDOING, PROFESSOR MORROW RETURNS TO HIS WORK AT THE UNIVERSITY.
I'M DISAPPOINTED IN LOSING THE BIG DIAMOND, BUT I HAVE THESE PIECES AND A LOT MORE SPRINKLED IN MY CARCASS!
6
EVER SINCE THAT TIME I HAVE LOST ALL SENSE OF FEELING ANY PAIN.... MY BODY SEEMS HARDENED! WHY, WHEN I STRIKE MY ARM WITH THIS RULER, **I CAN'T FEEL IT!**
PROFESSOR MORROW VISITS HIS PHYSICIAN....
MY THEORY IS THAT IN SOME STRANGE MANNER, THOSE DIAMOND FRAGMENTS IN YOUR BODY CAUSE THE HARDNESS!
WELL, THE DOCTOR SAYS THEY CAN'T BE REMOVED, SO I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO REMAIN A **HARD GUY!**
A FEW DAYS LATER, IN HIS LABORATORY, PROFESSOR MORROW CALLS HIS ASSISTANT.
GRAHAM.... **LOOK! I'VE DONE IT!**
WHAT IS IT?
DIAMONDS, GRAHAM! DIAMONDS!
FOR YEARS I HAVE TRIED TO PRODUCE SYNTHETIC DIAMONDS WITHOUT SUCCESS..... NOW, I HAVE THEM........ AND THEY ARE **BLUE**.... LIKE THE DIAMOND I FOUND NEAR THE SOUTH POLE!
I WONDER.... COULD THOSE DIAMOND PARTICLES IN MY BODY GIVE ME SOME STRANGE **SUPERHUMAN POWER?**


THAT AFTERNOON, NEAR THE UNIVERSITY....
THAT SPEEDING TRUCK WILL CRUSH THAT CHILD!
PROFESSOR MORROW LEAPS TO THE RESCUE!
7
A FEW SECONDS MORE WOULD BE TOO LATE!
THE PROFESSOR SNATCHES THE BOY FROM BENEATH THE WHEELS!
HE IS MERELY KNOCKED ASIDE AND THE TRUCK WRECKED!
YOU'RE SAFE, SONNY!
CRASH!
....WHY...I HARDLY FELT THAT! AND I WAS AS SOLID AS A GRANITE CLIFF WHEN THE TRUCK HIT ME!
WHAT'S THAT GUY MADE OF? LOOK AT THIS TRUCK!
THE PROFESSOR PONDERS AS HE WALKS HOME.....
THOSE DIAMOND PARTICLES MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS PHENOMENON!
I'M GOING TO TRY MY FIST ON THIS TREE!
CRACK!

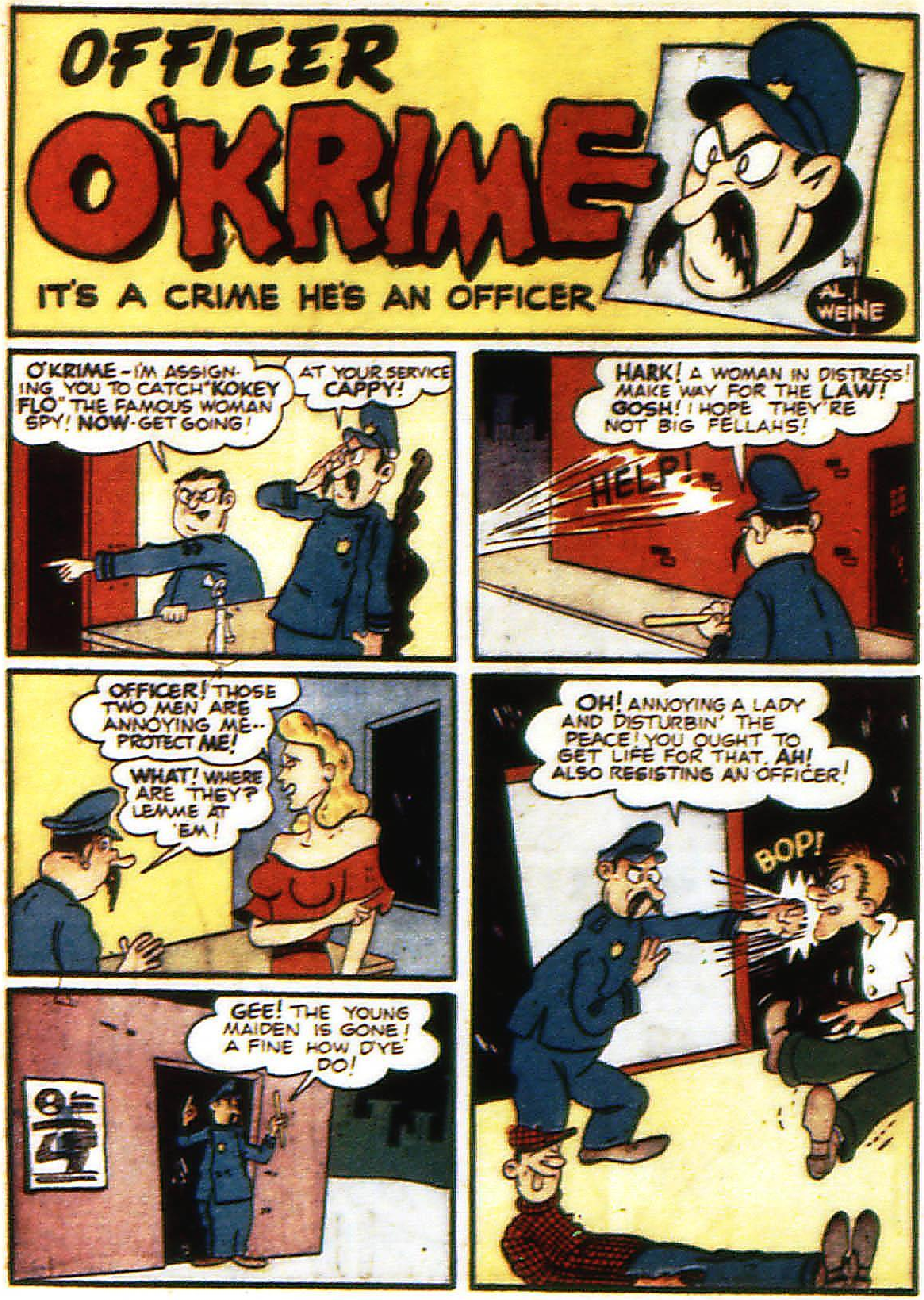

PROFESSOR MORROW STANDS BEWILDERED BEFORE THE SHATTERED TREE TRUNK!
WELL... I'LL BE....
HEY, YOU! THAT'S MY BEST SHADE TREE!
FER 20 BUCKS I KIN DO WITHOUT A LITTLE SHADE!
SORRY....I JUST FELT THE NEED OF A LITTLE EXERCISE!
LATER THAT NIGHT, HE WORKS IN HIS LABORATORY!
8
SAY...THAT LOOKS LIKE THE BEAM OF A FLASHLIGHT OVER IN THE MUSEUM!
THINK I'LL LOOK INTO THIS... AT THIS HOUR THE JANITORS SHOULD BE GONE!
LUCKY I HAVE A PASS-KEY FOR THE MUSEUM!
SUDDENLY, HE SURPRISES TWO MASKED MEN!
SHOOT HIM! WE CAN'T TAKE A CHANCE ON BEING CAUGHT!
THIEVES!
TRYING TO STEAL THE MUSEUM'S PRICELESS TREASURES, EH?
THE BULLETS STRIKE HIM AND RICOCHET OFF!
YOU'RE DUE FOR A SURPRISE, MY FRIENDS!
BANG!
HEY! TH' GUY AIN'T HUMAN! BULLETS DON'T HURT HIM!
NO, THE BLUE DIAMONDS IN MY BODY PROTECT ME!

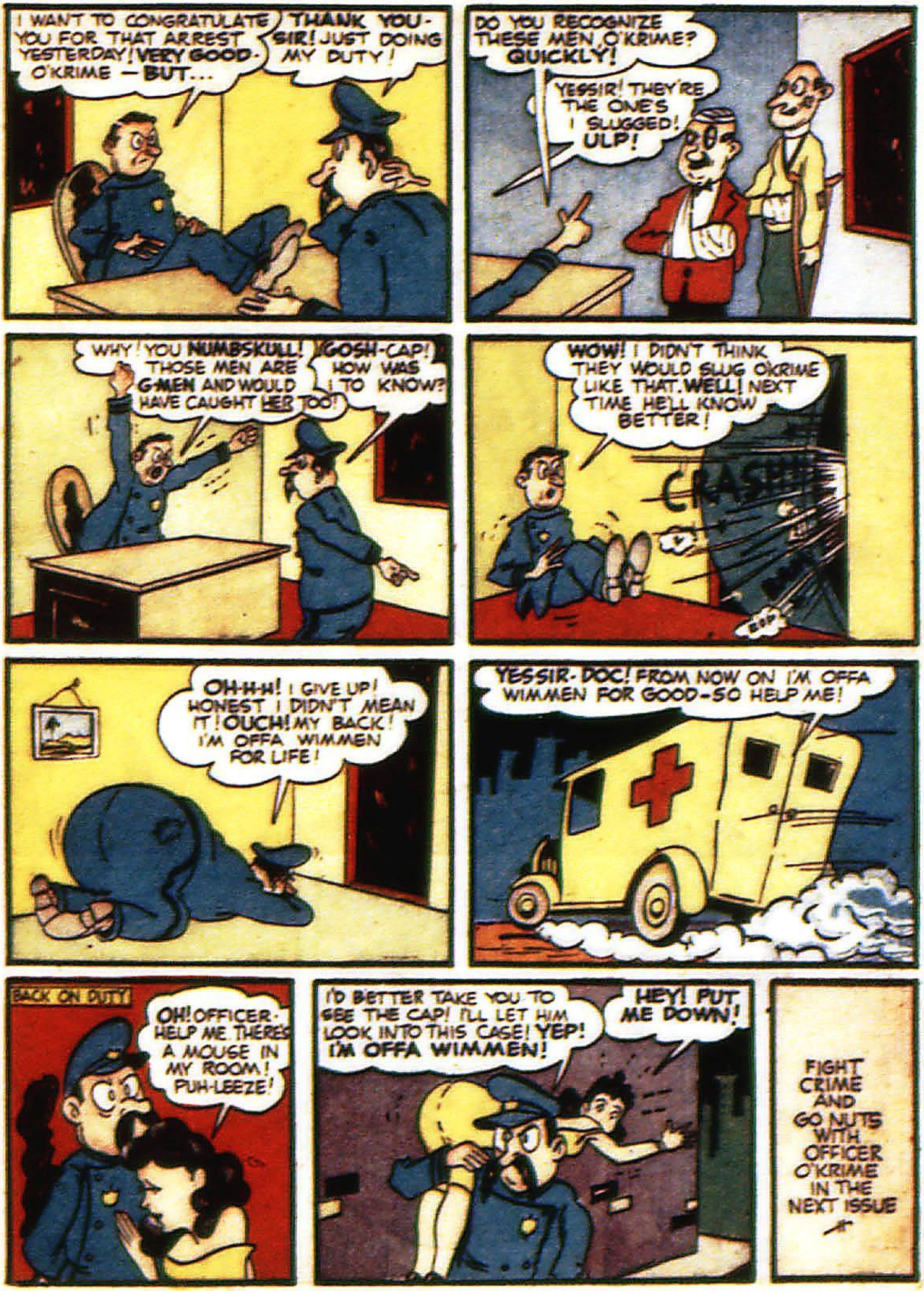

YOU'RE JUST LUCKY I DON'T HIT YOU **HARD!**
OW...W...W.... MY HEAD!
A LITTLE STRETCH IN PRISON WILL TEACH YOU NOT TO ROB MUSEUMS!
AFTER LOCKING THE CROOKS IN A CLOSET, HE CALLS THE POLICE!
YOU'LL FIND TWO BURGLARS LOCKED IN A CLOSET IN ROOM 3-A IN THE MUSEUM! -NEVER MIND WHO THIS IS!
WITH MY POWERS.... THE GREAT HARDNESS OF MY BODY AND ABILITY TO ABSORD ANY BLOW WITHOUT HARM.... I CAN WAGE A ONE-MAN **WAR ON CRIME!**
A FEW DAYS LATER, PROFESSOR MORROW GARBS HIMSELF IN A UNIQUE COSTUME.......
DRESSED LIKE THIS, I WILL BECOME THE FOE OF CRIME AND LAWLESSNESS! SO THAT NO ONE WILL SUSPECT ME, I WILL STILL BE KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC AS PROFESSOR MORROW!
BUT, TO CRIMINALS, I WILL BE KNOWN AND FEARED AS **BLUE DIAMOND!**
IN HIS OFFICE THE NEXT DAY.....
WONDER WHO CAUGHT THOSE BURGLARS IN THE MUSEUM? THE POLICE ARE STILL MYSTIFIED!
THEY'LL SOON HAVE OTHER SIMILIAR MYSTERIES, MY FRIEND!
DON'T MISS THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF *BLUE DIAMOND* HERE NEXT MONTH!

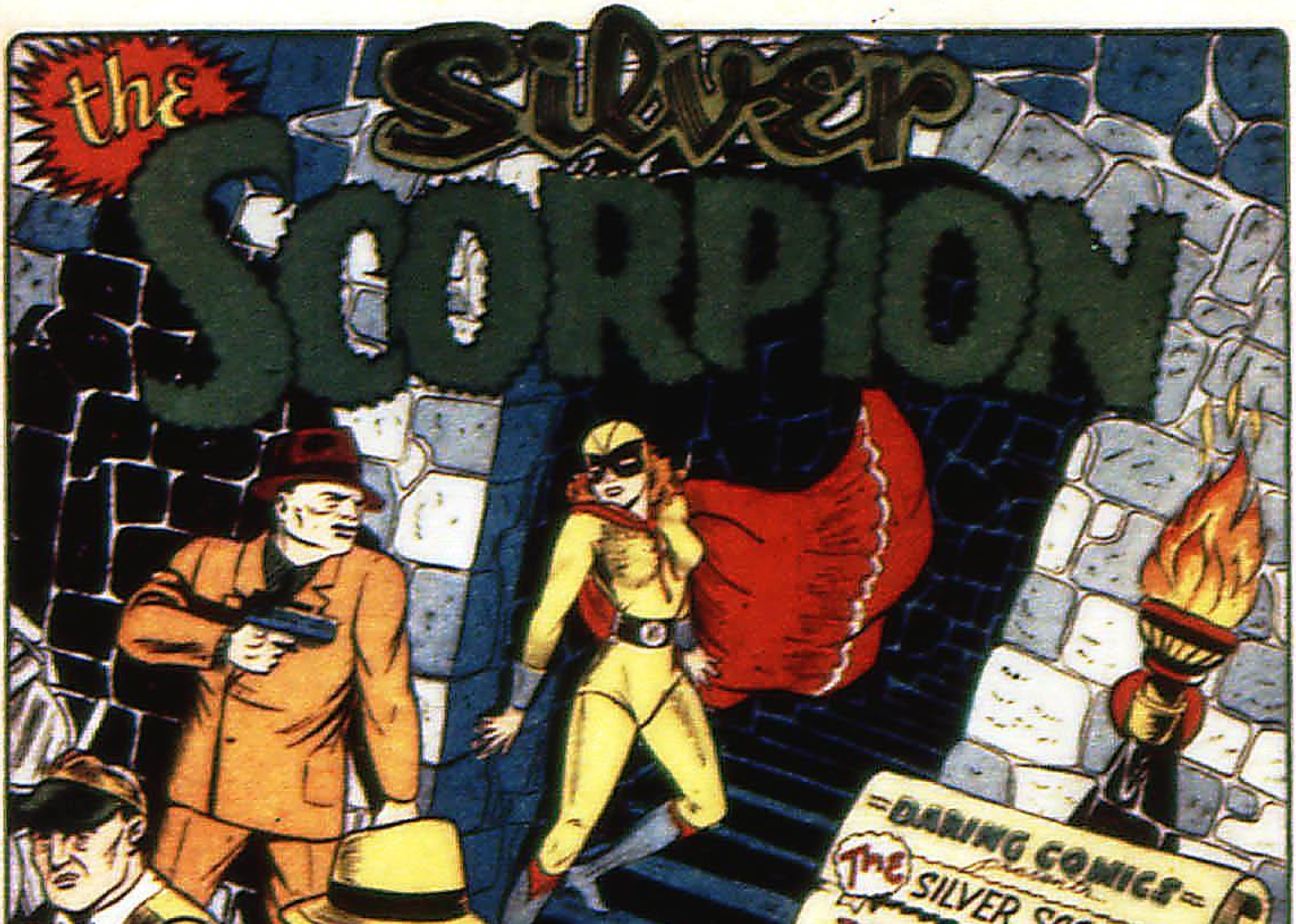
OFFICER O'KRIME

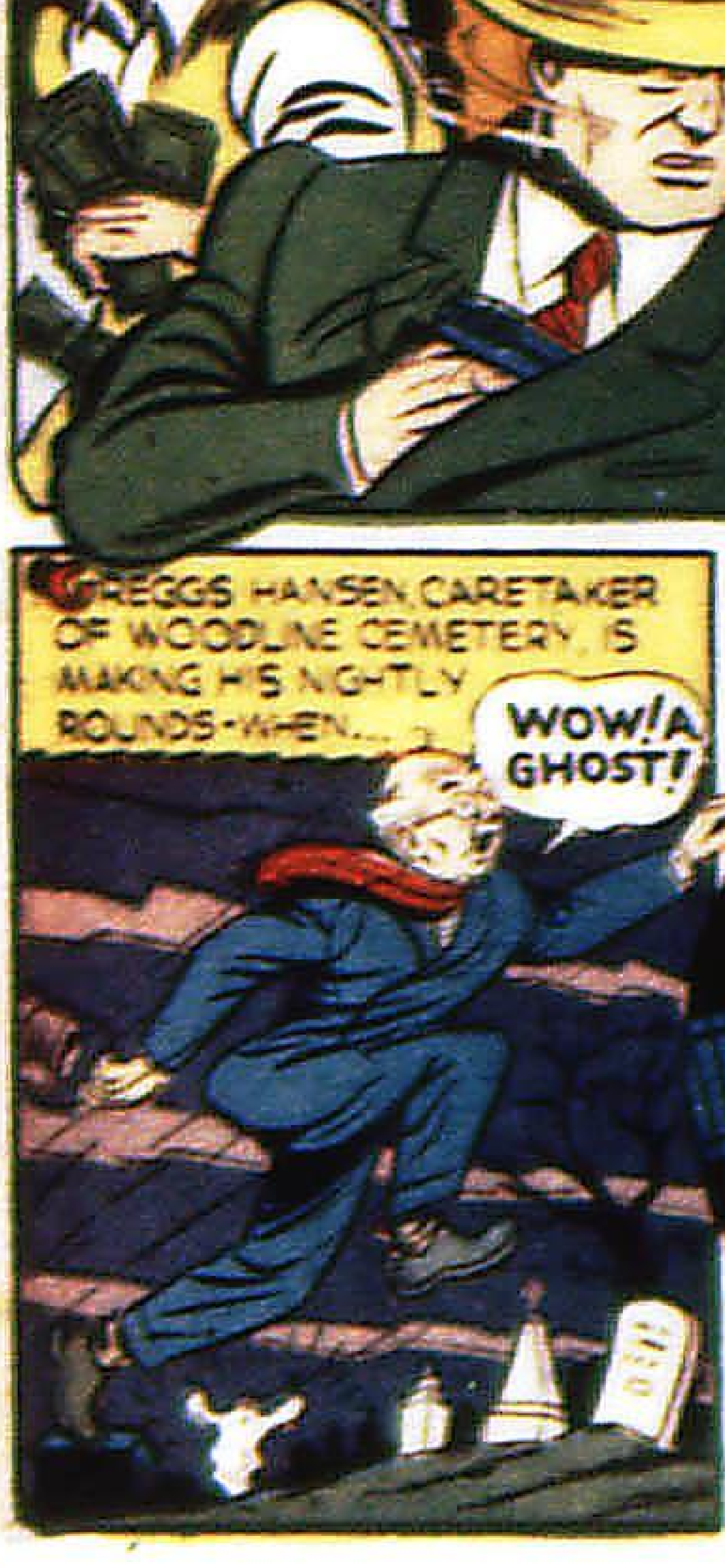
IT'S A CRIME HE'S AN OFFICER

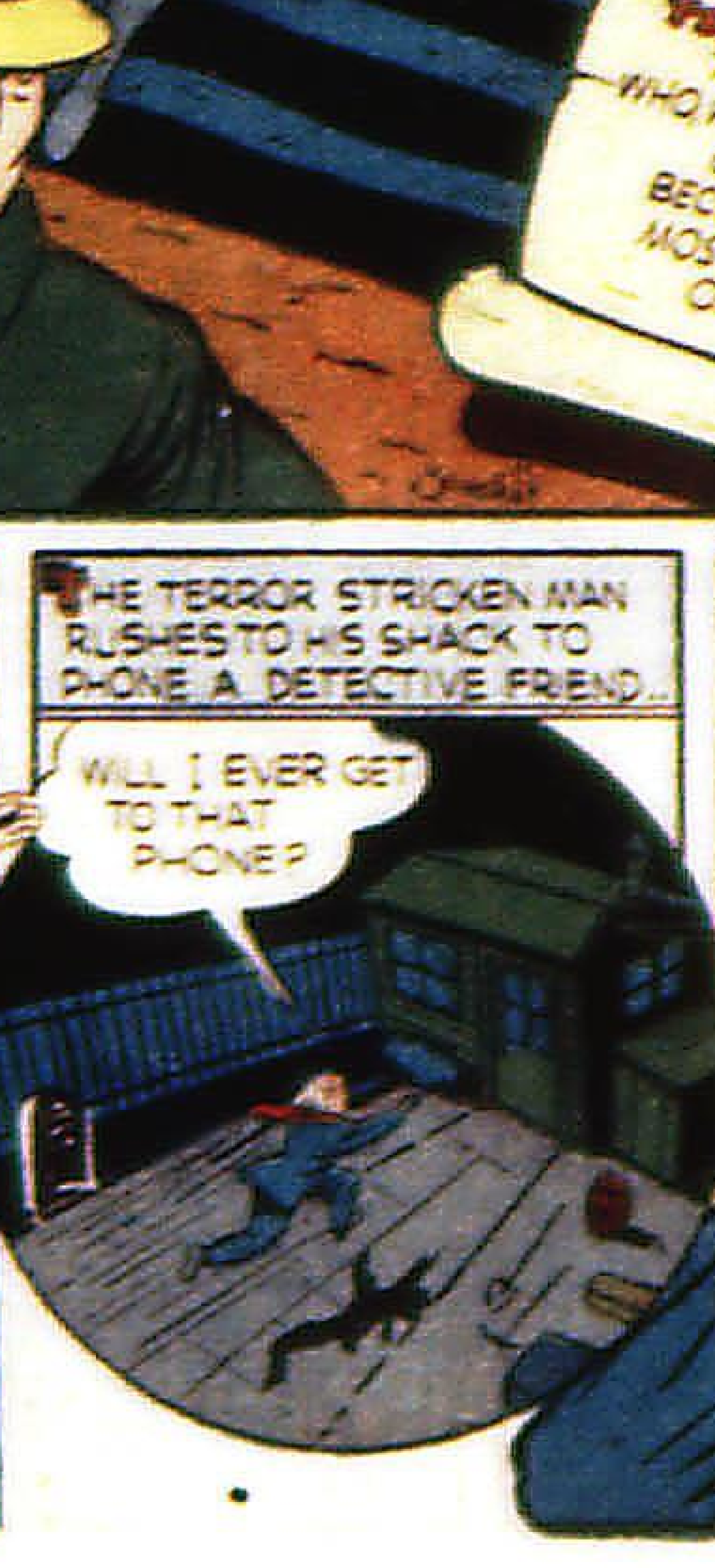
by AL WEINE

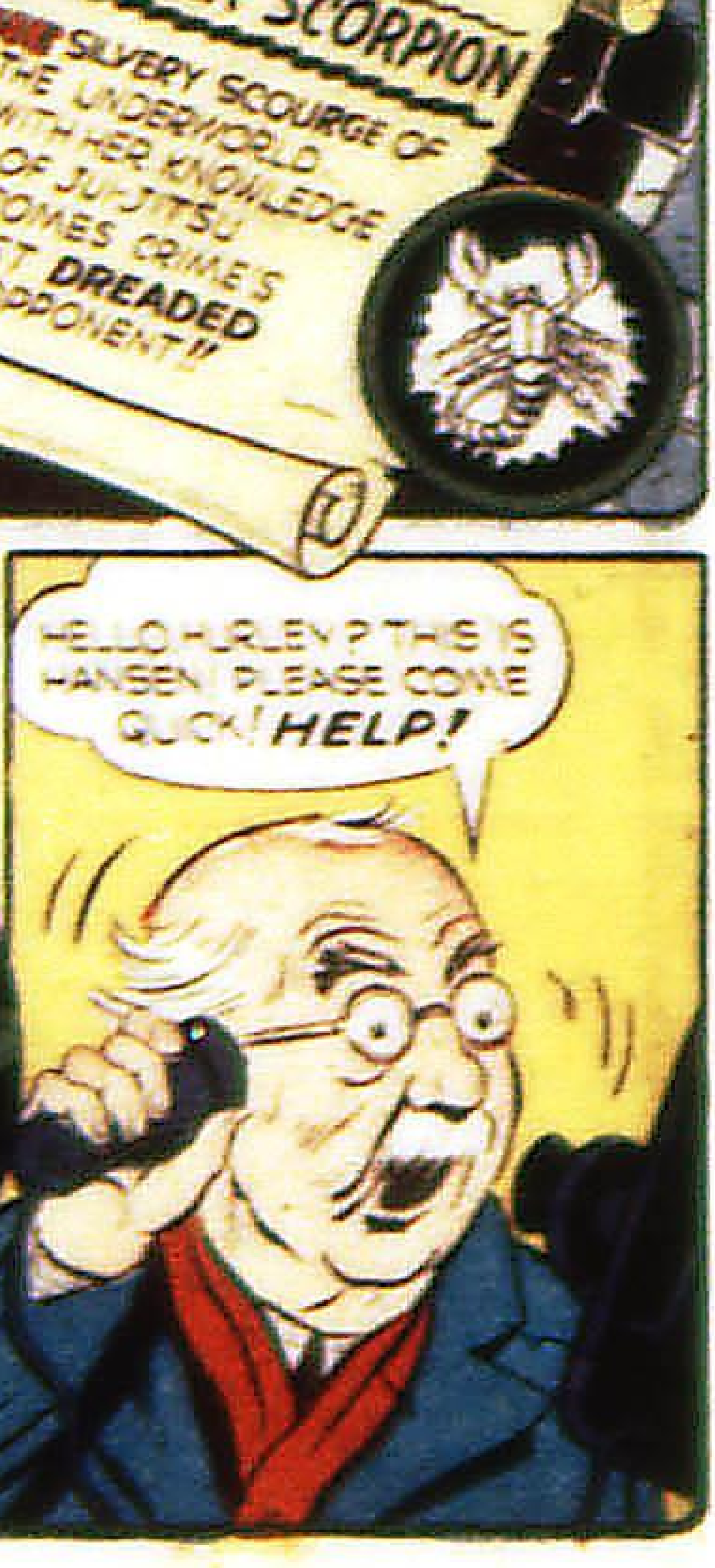

O'KRIME - I'M ASSIGNING YOU TO CATCH "KOKEY FLO" THE FAMOUS WOMAN SPY! NOW - GET GOING!
AT YOUR SERVICE CAPPY!
HARK! A WOMAN IN DISTRESS! MAKE WAY FOR THE LAW! GOSH! I HOPE THEY'RE NOT BIG FELLAHS!
HELP!
OFFICER! THOSE TWO MEN ARE ANNOYING ME.. PROTECT ME!
WHAT! WHERE ARE THEY? LEMME AT 'EM!
OH! ANNOYING A LADY AND DISTURBIN' THE PEACE! YOU OUGHT TO GET LIFE FOR THAT. AH! ALSO RESISTING AN OFFICER!
BOP!
GEE! THE YOUNG MAIDEN IS GONE! A FINE HOW D'YE DO!

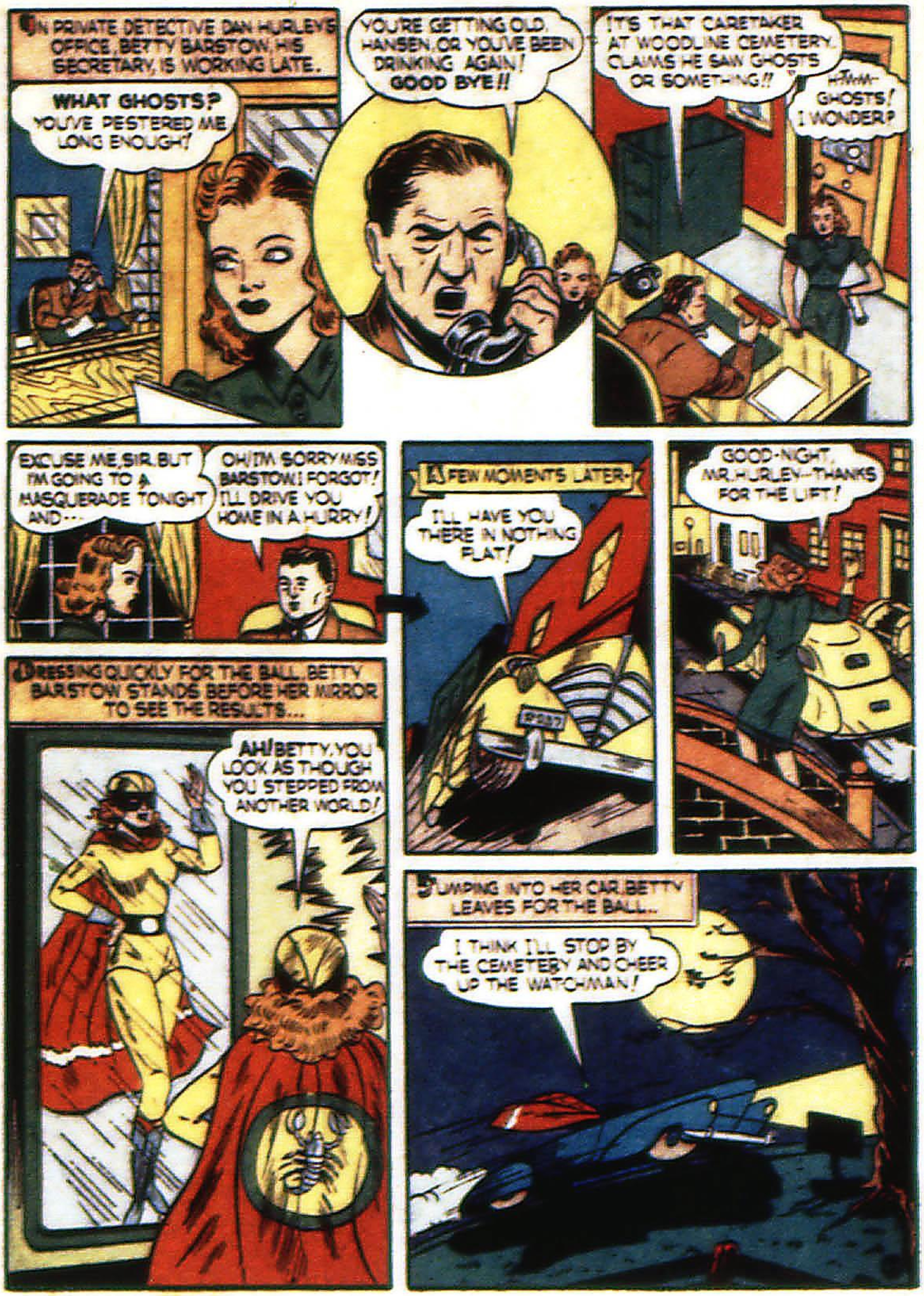

I WANT TO CONGRATULATE YOU FOR THAT ARREST YESTERDAY! VERY GOOD. O'KRIME —BUT...
THANK YOU-SIR! JUST DOING MY DUTY!
DO YOU RECOGNIZE THESE MEN, O'KRIME? QUICKLY!
YESSIR! THEY'RE THE ONE'S I SLUGGED! ULP!
WHY! YOU NUMBSKULL! THOSE MEN ARE G-MEN AND WOULD HAVE CAUGHT HER TOO!
GOSH-CAP! HOW WAS I TO KNOW?
WOW! I DIDN'T THINK THEY WOULD SLUG O'KRIME LIKE THAT. WELL! NEXT TIME HE'LL KNOW BETTER!
CRASH!!
OH-H-H! I GIVE UP! HONEST I DIDN'T MEAN IT! OUCH! MY BACK! I'M OFFA WIMMEN FOR LIFE!
YESSIR-DOC! FROM NOW ON I'M OFFA WIMMEN FOR GOOD-SO HELP ME!
BACK ON DUTY
OH! OFFICER-HELP ME THERE'S A MOUSE IN MY ROOM! PUH-LEEZE!
I'D BETTER TAKE YOU TO SEE THE CAP! I'LL LET HIM LOOK INTO THIS CASE! YEP! I'M OFFA WIMMEN!
HEY! PUT ME DOWN!
FIGHT CRIME AND GO NUTS WITH OFFICER O'KRIME IN THE NEXT ISSUE

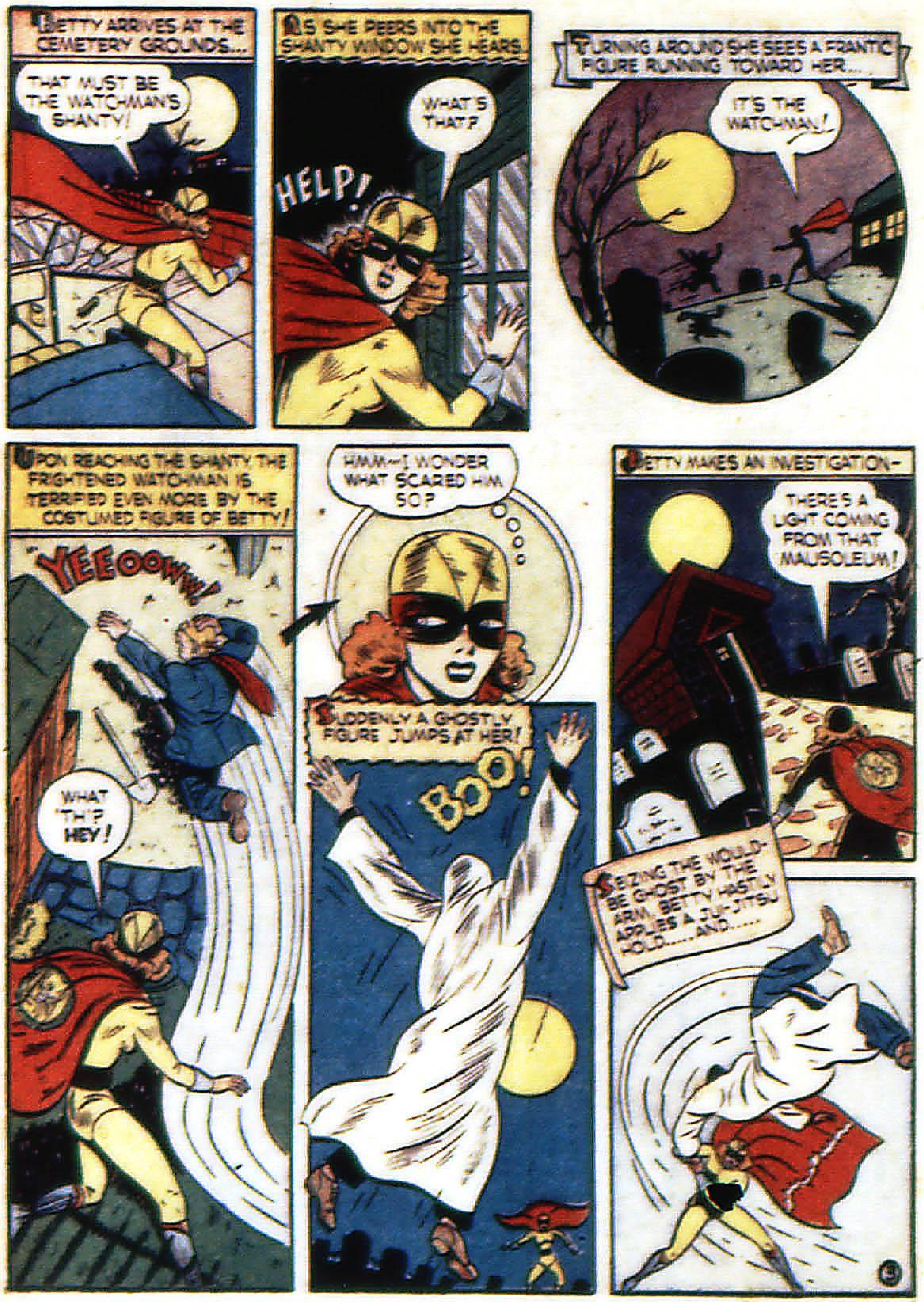

the Silver SCORPION
DARING COMICS presents
THE SILVER SCORPION
THE SILVERY SCOURGE OF THE UNDERWORLD WHO, WITH HER KNOWLEDGE OF JU-JITSU BECOMES CRIME'S MOST DREADED OPPONENT!!

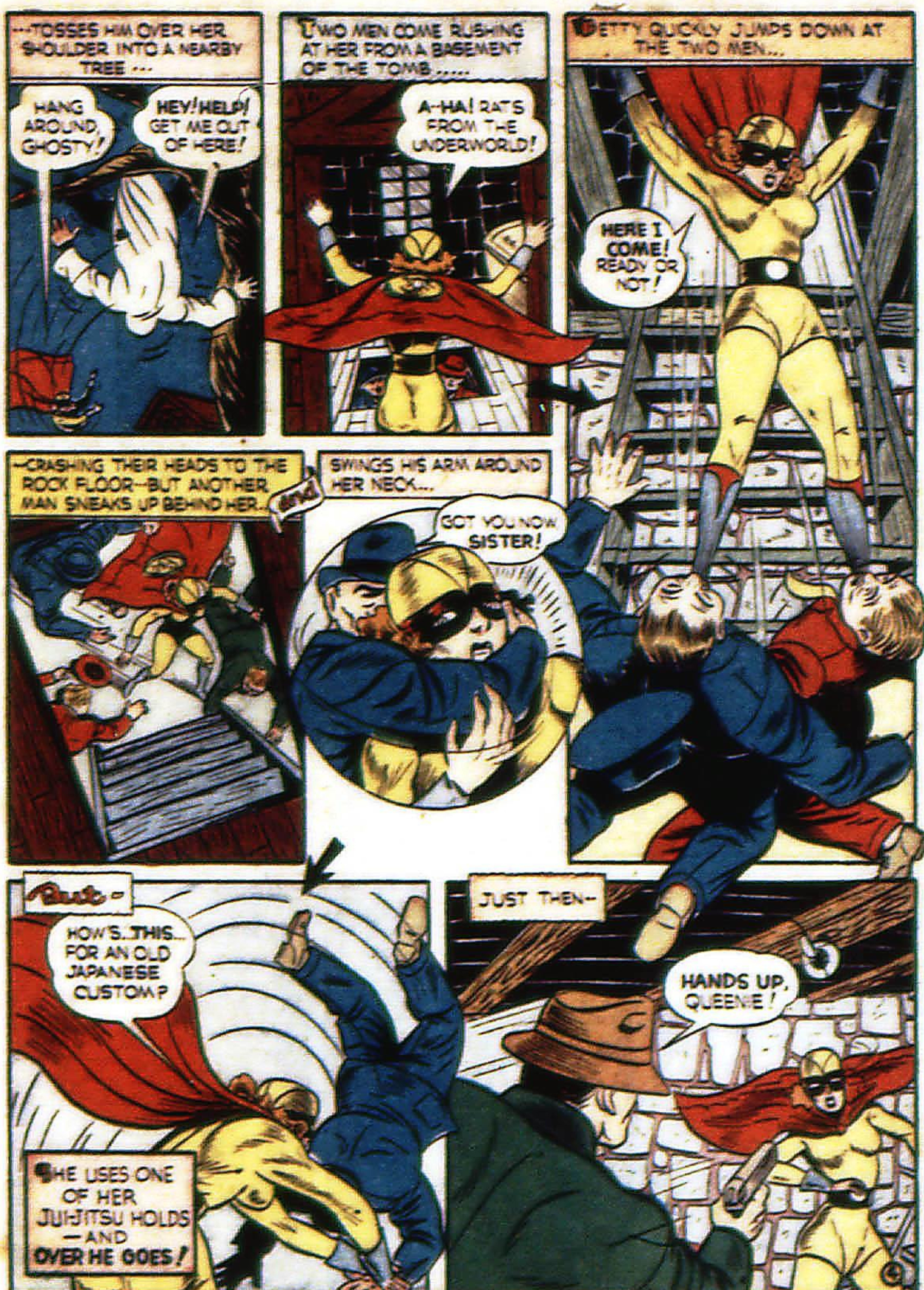

GREGGS HANSEN, CARETAKER OF WOODLINE CEMETERY, IS MAKING HIS NIGHTLY ROUNDS-WHEN...
WOW! A GHOST!

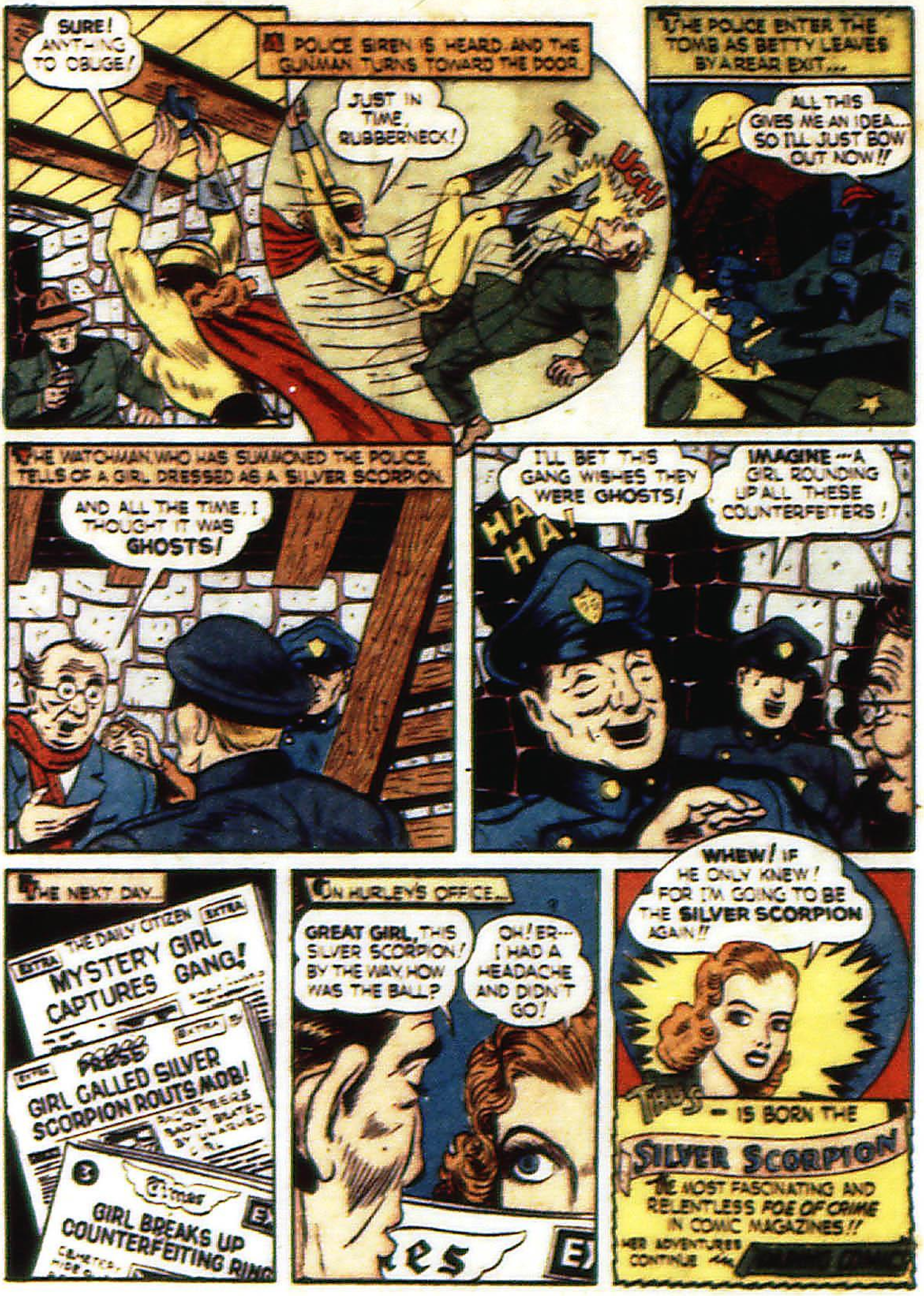

THE TERROR STRICKEN MAN RUSHES TO HIS SHACK TO PHONE A DETECTIVE FRIEND...
WILL I EVER GET TO THAT PHONE?


HELLO HURLEY? THIS IS HANSEN! PLEASE COME QUICK! HELP!

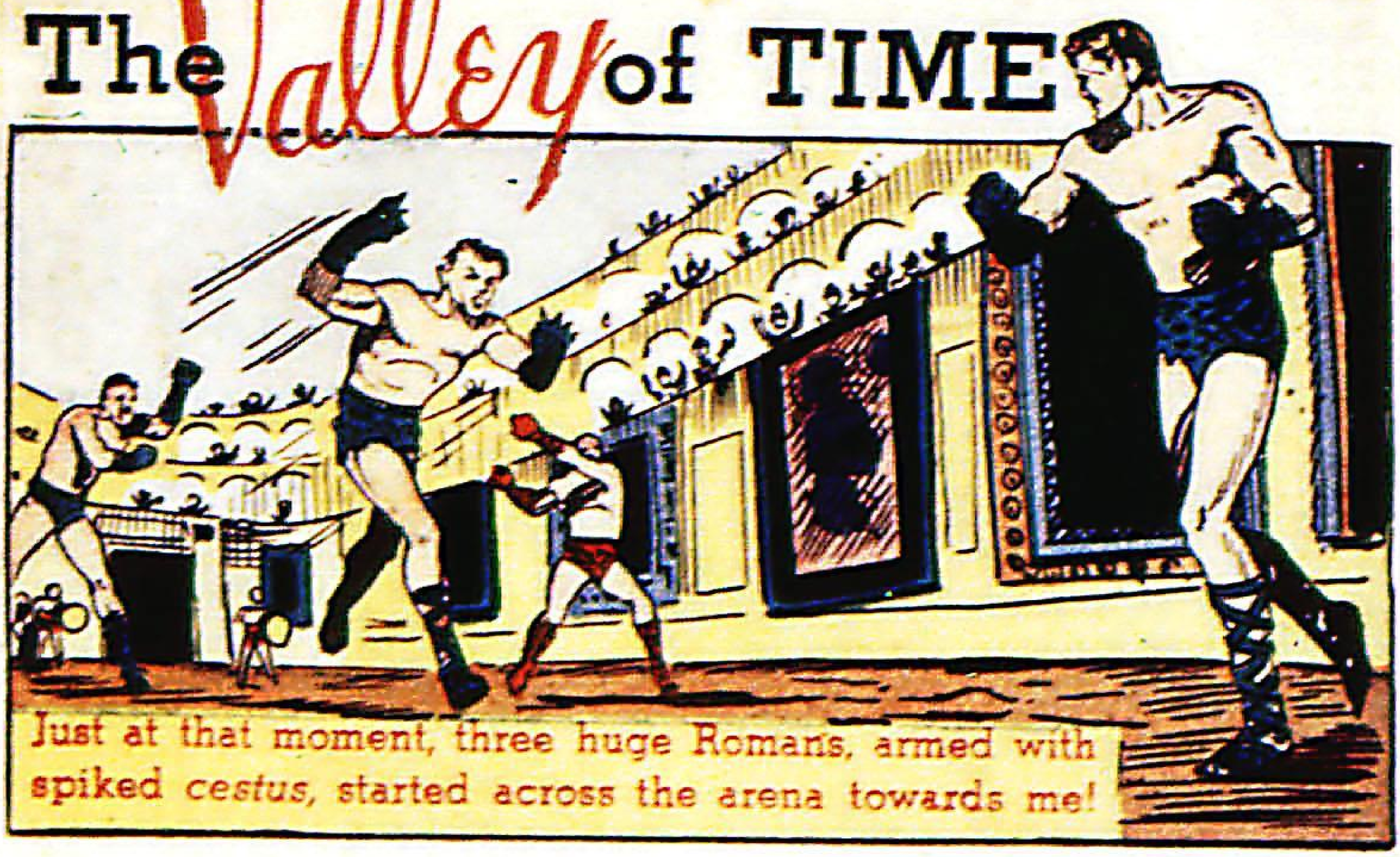

IN PRIVATE DETECTIVE DAN HURLEY'S OFFICE, BETTY BARSTOW, HIS SECRETARY, IS WORKING LATE.
WHAT GHOSTS? YOU'VE PESTERED ME LONG ENOUGH!
YOU'RE GETTING OLD, HANSEN, OR YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING AGAIN! GOOD BYE!!
IT'S THAT CARETAKER AT WOODLINE CEMETERY. CLAIMS HE SAW GHOSTS OR SOMETHING!!
H-MM- GHOSTS! I WONDER?
EXCUSE ME, SIR, BUT I'M GOING TO A MASQUERADE TONIGHT AND...
OH! I'M SORRY MISS BARSTOW! I FORGOT! I'LL DRIVE YOU HOME IN A HURRY!
A FEW MOMENTS LATER-
I'LL HAVE YOU THERE IN NOTHING FLAT!
GOOD-NIGHT, MR. HURLEY--THANKS FOR THE LIFT!
DRESSING QUICKLY FOR THE BALL, BETTY BARSTOW STANDS BEFORE HER MIRROR TO SEE THE RESULTS...
AH! BETTY, YOU LOOK AS THOUGH YOU STEPPED FROM ANOTHER WORLD!
JUMPING INTO HER CAR, BETTY LEAVES FOR THE BALL..
I THINK I'LL STOP BY THE CEMETERY AND CHEER UP THE WATCHMAN!


BETTY ARRIVES AT THE CEMETERY GROUNDS...
THAT MUST BE THE WATCHMAN'S SHANTY!
AS SHE PEERS INTO THE SHANTY WINDOW SHE HEARS...
WHAT'S THAT?
HELP!
TURNING AROUND SHE SEES A FRANTIC FIGURE RUNNING TOWARD HER...
IT'S THE WATCHMAN!
UPON REACHING THE SHANTY THE FRIGHTENED WATCHMAN IS TERRIFIED EVEN MORE BY THE COSTUMED FIGURE OF BETTY!
YEEOOWW!
WHAT 'TH'? HEY!
HMM--I WONDER WHAT SCARED HIM SO?
SUDDENLY A GHOSTLY FIGURE JUMPS AT HER!
BOO!
BETTY MAKES AN INVESTIGATION-
THERE'S A LIGHT COMING FROM THAT MAUSOLEUM!
SEIZING THE WOULD-BE GHOST BY THE ARM, BETTY HASTILY APPLIES A JU-JITSU HOLD......AND.....


---TOSSES HIM OVER HER SHOULDER INTO A NEARBY TREE ---
HANG AROUND, GHOSTY!
HEY! HELP! GET ME OUT OF HERE!
TWO MEN COME RUSHING AT HER FROM A BASEMENT OF THE TOMB.....
A-HA! RATS FROM THE UNDERWORLD!
BETTY QUICKLY JUMPS DOWN AT THE TWO MEN...
HERE I COME! READY OR NOT!
--CRASHING THEIR HEADS TO THE ROCK FLOOR--BUT ANOTHER MAN SNEAKS UP BEHIND HER...
and
SWINGS HIS ARM AROUND HER NECK...
GOT YOU NOW SISTER!
Bust -
HOW'S...THIS... FOR AN OLD JAPANESE CUSTOM?
SHE USES ONE OF HER JUJITSU HOLDS --AND OVER HE GOES!
JUST THEN--
HANDS UP, QUEENIE!


SURE! ANYTHING TO OBLIGE!
A POLICE SIREN IS HEARD AND THE GUNMAN TURNS TOWARD THE DOOR.
JUST IN TIME, RUBBERNECK!
UGH!
THE POLICE ENTER THE TOMB AS BETTY LEAVES BY A REAR EXIT...
ALL THIS GIVES ME AN IDEA... SO I'LL JUST BOW OUT NOW!!
THE WATCHMAN, WHO HAS SUMMONED THE POLICE, TELLS OF A GIRL DRESSED AS A SILVER SCORPION.
AND ALL THE TIME, I THOUGHT IT WAS GHOSTS!
I'LL BET THIS GANG WISHES THEY WERE GHOSTS!
HA HA!
IMAGINE --- A GIRL ROUNDING UP ALL THESE COUNTERFEITERS!
THE NEXT DAY...
THE DAILY CITIZEN
EXTRA
MYSTERY GIRL CAPTURES GANG!
PRESS
GIRL CALLED SILVER SCORPION ROUTS MOB!
RACKETEERS BADLY BEATEN BY UNARMED GIRL
Times
GIRL BREAKS UP COUNTERFEITING RING
IN HURLEY'S OFFICE...
GREAT GIRL, THIS SILVER SCORPION! BY THE WAY, HOW WAS THE BALL?
OH! ER--- I HAD A HEADACHE AND DIDN'T GO!
WHEW! IF HE ONLY KNEW! FOR I'M GOING TO BE THE SILVER SCORPION AGAIN!!
THUS — IS BORN THE
SILVER SCORPION
THE MOST FASCINATING AND RELENTLESS FOE OF CRIME IN COMIC MAGAZINES!!
HER ADVENTURES CONTINUE IN

The Valley of TIME



Just at that moment, three huge Romans, armed with spiked *cestus,* started across the arena towards me!

AFTER spending several months in Central Africa learning the use of their various weapons, I went to Abyssinia to gain further knowledge. This was right after the rainy season, and the rivers were swollen and dangerous. Hiring a boat, with the native owner acting as first mate, we headed down toward the Nile, unaware of the strange adventure that lay ahead.

This tributary, starting high up in the Abyssinian highlands where the flood waters gathered, was particularly dangerous, especially through the narrow gorges between mountains.

Suddenly the river broadened, and though the water was still fast, navigation became much simpler and, apparently, safer. But we hadn't gone far when the native abruptly stood up and pointed ahead.

"Kam ga!" he shouted.

That meant whirlpool. I got quickly to my feet and looked to where he pointed. Sure enough, not a hundred feet away, directly in our path, was a huge, spinning whirlpool!

Shouting angrily, the native tried frantically to steer our boat past the dreaded pool. But try as he might, the attraction of the whirlpool could not be denied. Slowly, but surely, we were drawn to the edge of the whirling water.

Suddenly, without the slightest warning, the native yelled and dived into the river. He struck out desperately for shore, but his efforts were futile. The rushing waters quickly carried him to his doom!

There was nothing I could have done to save him. At that same moment the boat was caught in the outer edge of the whirlpool, and the sickening dizzy trip began! Around and around we went, in an ever-narrowing circle. I leapt to the tiller, to make one last desperate attempt to get free. But just as I grabbed for it the boat took a sudden lunge, something crashed against the side of my head — and I knew no more!

WHEN I came to, I was lying on a sandy beach at the edge of a small lake. Completely bewildered I stood up, my head still spinning from the force of the blow, and looked about. The land stretched for miles on all sides in a vast plateau, surrounded by towering cliffs. Where I was, or what had happened to the boat, of course I didn't know.

After a while my head stopped spinning and I started looking about for a way out. But I hadn't walked very far through the dense foliage that lay back of the beach when I heard voices — the voices of two men, conversing in Latin!

Puzzled over this, I made my way toward where they should be. And two minutes later I came upon a sight I'll never forget, a sight that

By THE CHALLENGER . . . As told to Ray Gill knocked the very breath from my body. The men who were talking were attired in the togas used in ancient Rome!

I must have uttered a startled gasp, for they immediately turned and saw me. And then, before I could make the slightest move to prevent it, the men rushed!

Carried off my feet by the surprise and intensity of their attack, I could only make the feeblest attempt to defend myself, for they were well over six feet in height, and strong as bulls. So, less than five minutes later, I was their captive, and was marched off.

We finally came upon a city—like a picture out of a history book — and walked through the streets. The people, all attired in the dress of old Rome, stared at me and my strange clothes. I felt like a man from Mars! We approached a stone building, larger than the others and we went in. The guard on my left gave an order and a great door was opened. I was ushered in.

Behind the table, on a big throne, sat a man that reminded me of Julius Caeser! But, it wasn't — it was the Mayor.

The Mayor asked many questions, and I answered them in my best school Latin, but the old fellow didn't quite understand. He did understand, however, that I was a stranger—and consequently, an enemy of the state! He rattled off an order — and I was taken off to the cellar! He had said something about a fight.

The guards pushed me into a stone cell, where I sat for the rest of the day. In the evening I was given a stone platter of fruits and meat, and then left for the rest of the night. I got little sleep, wondering where I was — and what they were going to do with me. However, in the morning I got the answer to the latter question!

At dawn the guards of the day before returned and took me from the cell. They hustled me upstairs — through more hallways, and into a barred room. There I was given a pair of leather thongs, which I recognized to be the ancient Roman hand weapon — the *cestus!* These were laced on my hands and wrists like a pair of modern boxing gloves.

Then I was pushed through a heavy door and out into a corridor. At the end of this corridor there was another door, at each side of which stood a guard.

"Hey!" I shouted. "What's going on here?"

One of the guards by my side smiled, and, in Latin which I had trouble understanding, said: "That, strange man, you will soon learn!"

The guards at the far door opened it as we approached, and stood to one side. Daylight streamed in, flooding the corridor, and I heard the sound of many voices. Before I could protest again I was shoved out into the open — into an ancient Roman arena!

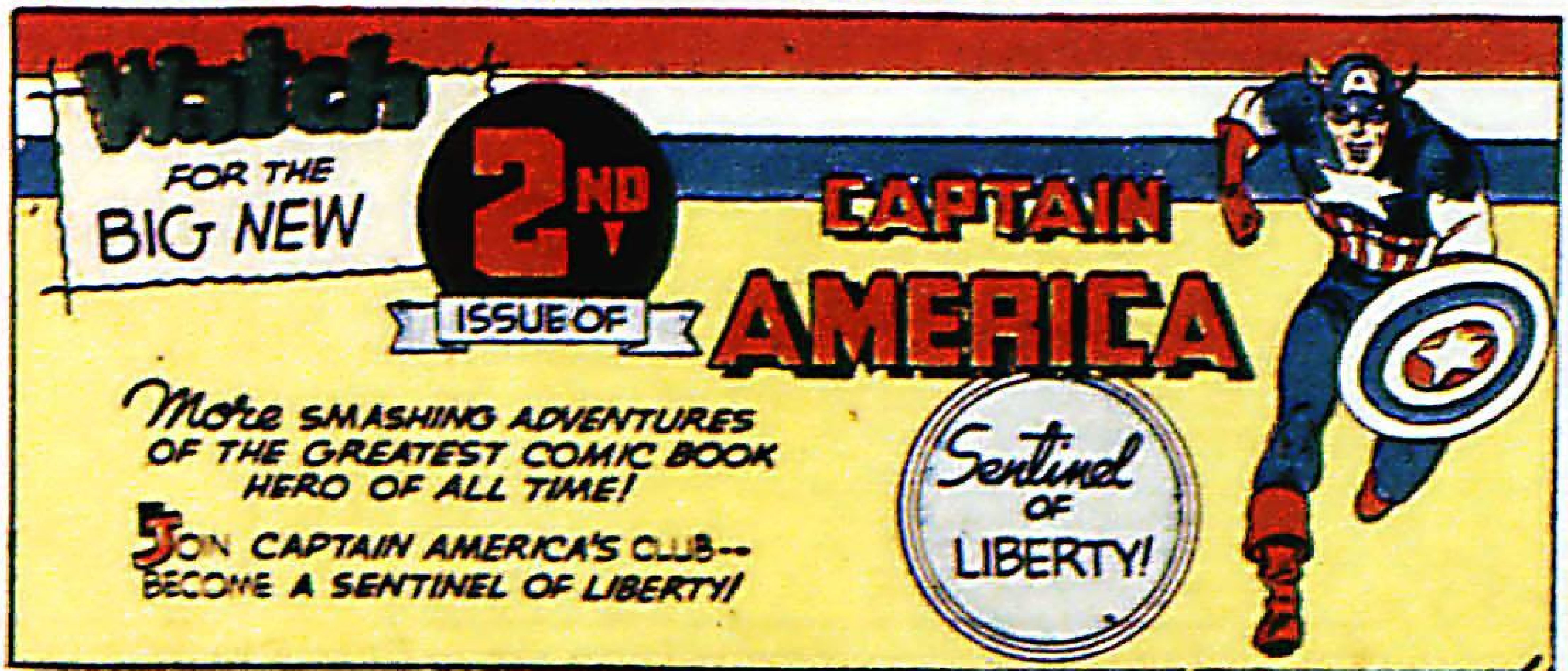
Then I *knew* what was going on. I was chosen as the sacrificial lamb that would be slaughtered by brawny Roman warriors for the amusement of a holiday crowd that filled the stands that rose all about me!

I stared at the Mayor's box, and contemplated for a moment protesting to him over the utter stupidity of the whole thing. But I never got the chance. For, just at that moment, three huge Romans, armed with spiked cestus, started across the arena toward me!

What will be the outcome of the Challenger's fight?

In what strange land has he found himself?

These questions will be answered in the concluding installment of this gripping story in next month's DARING COMICS!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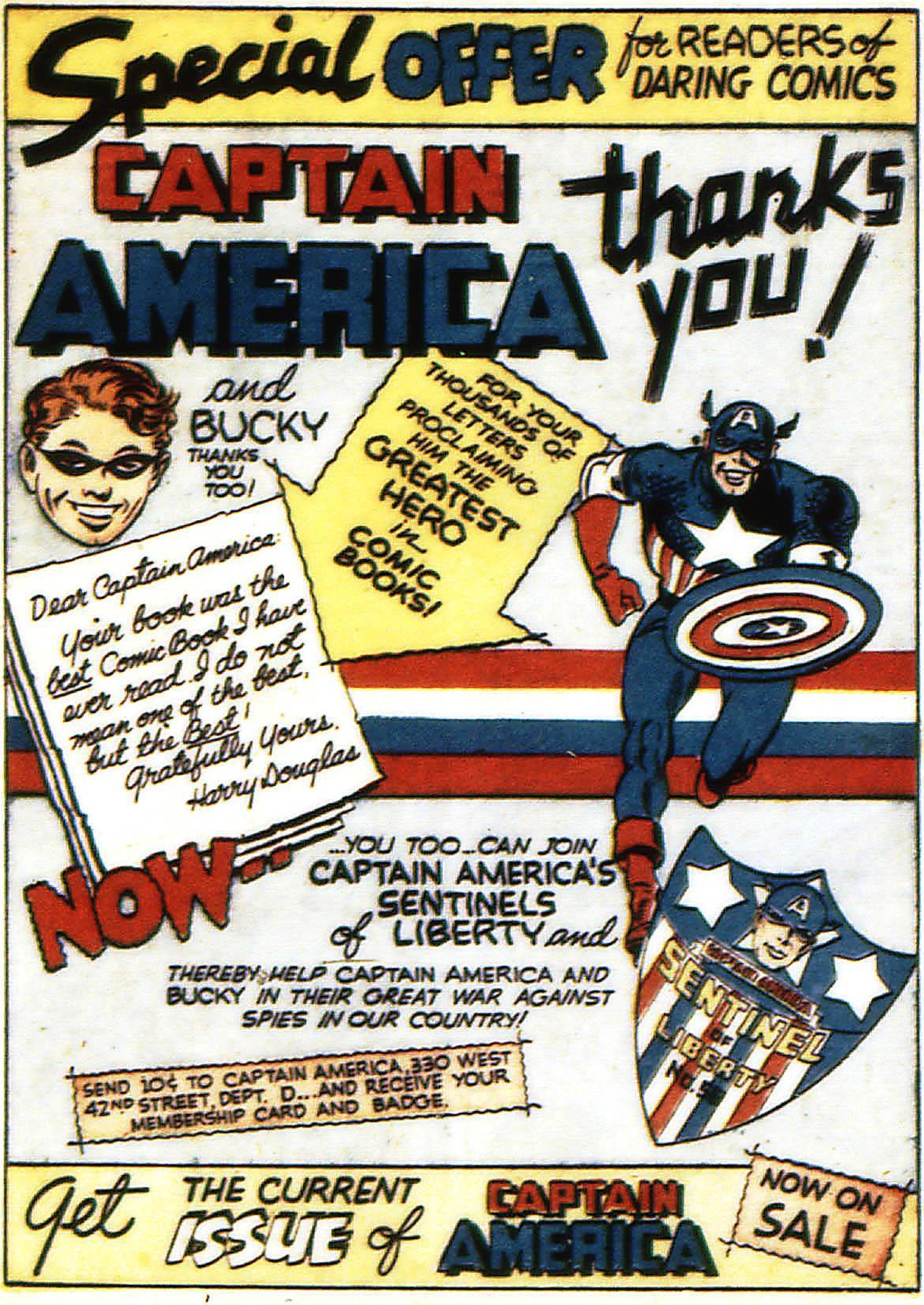

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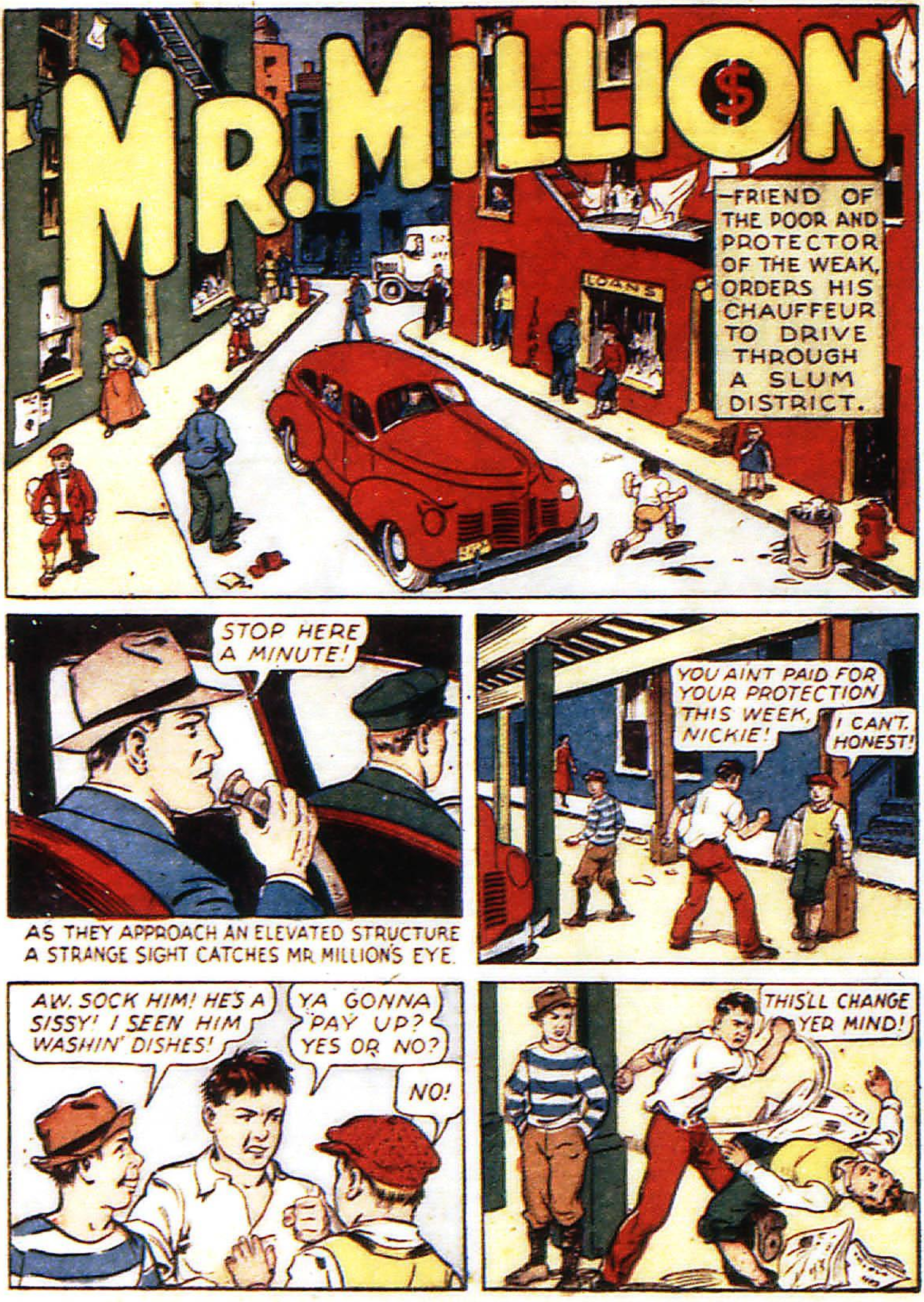
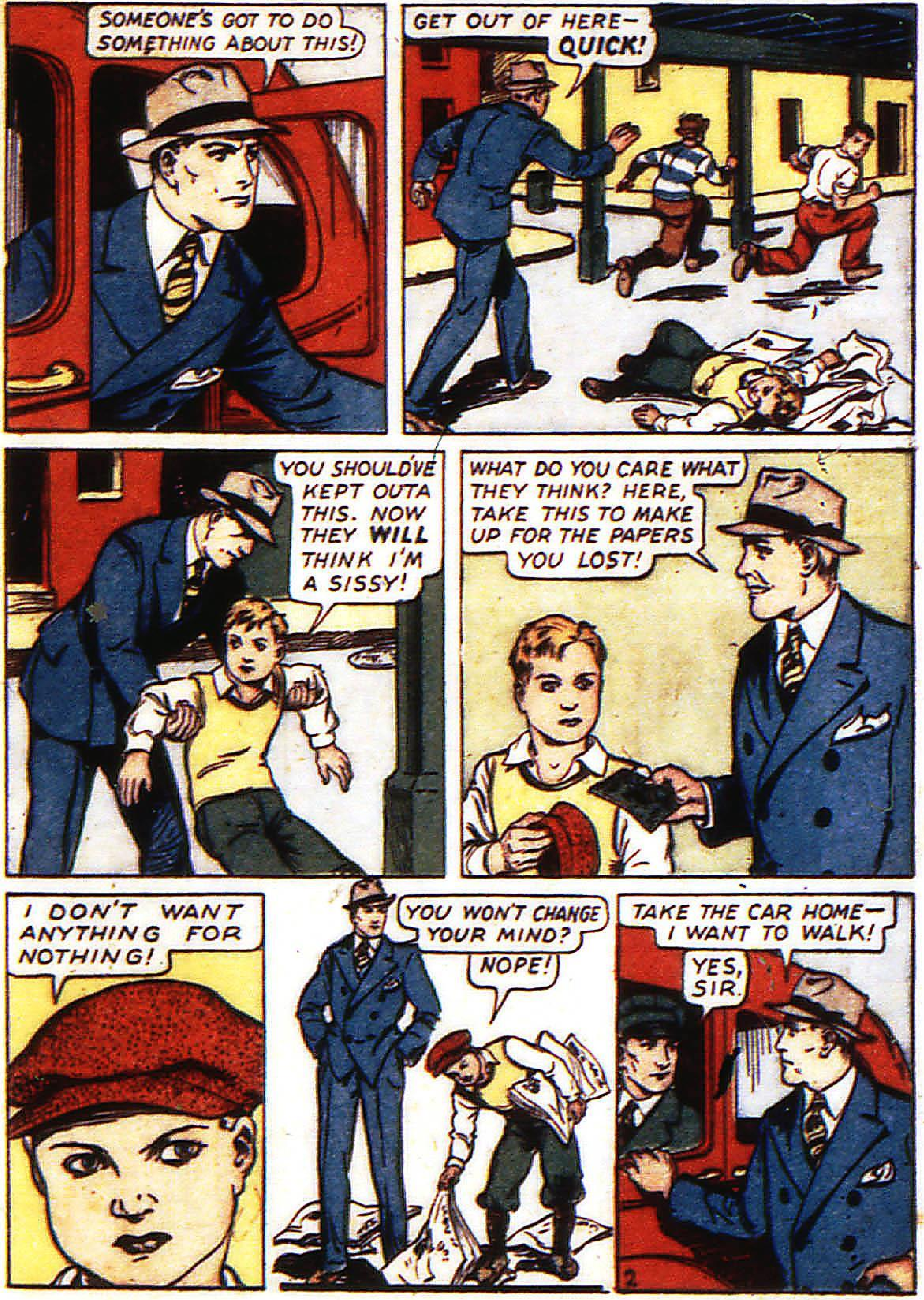
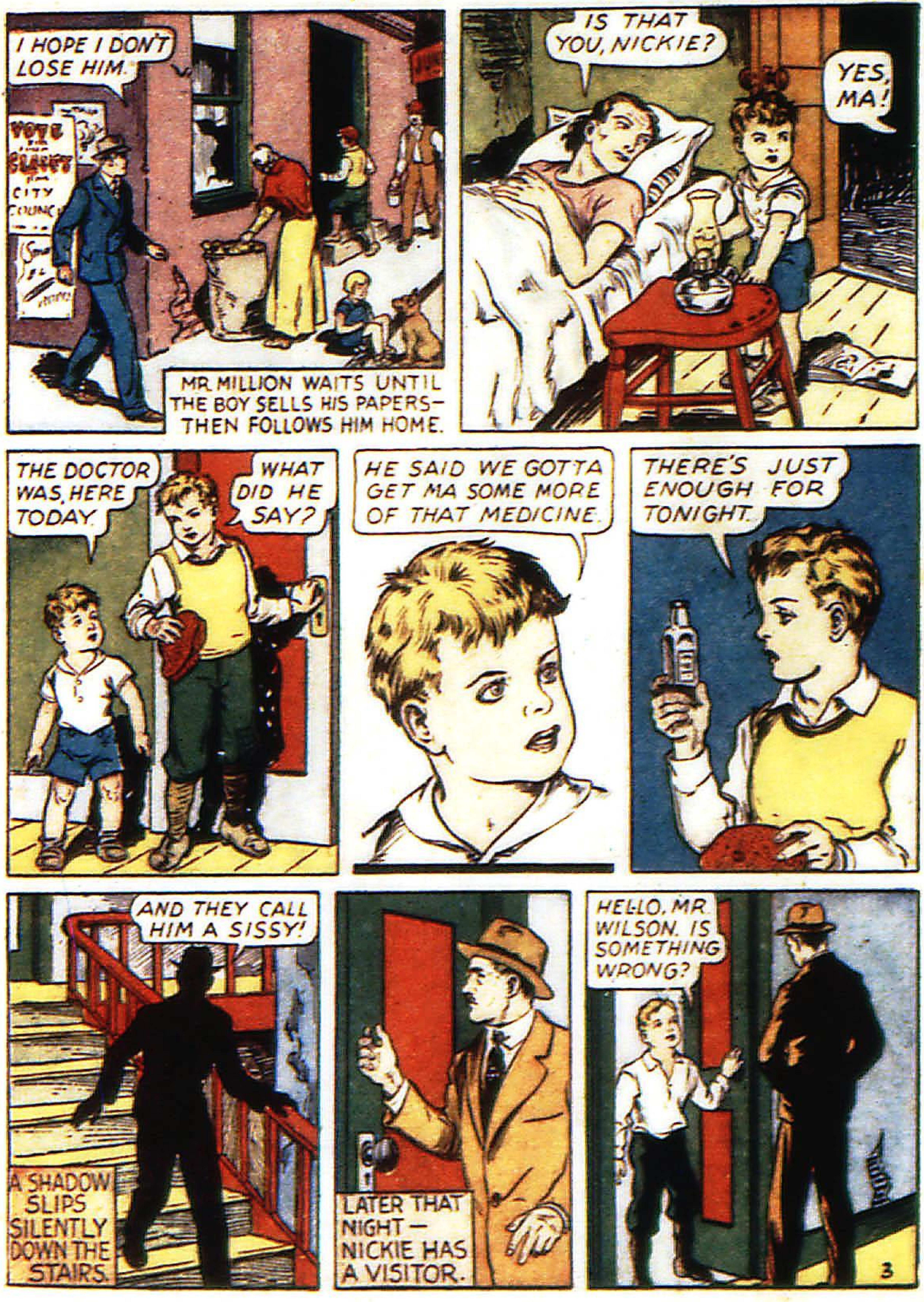
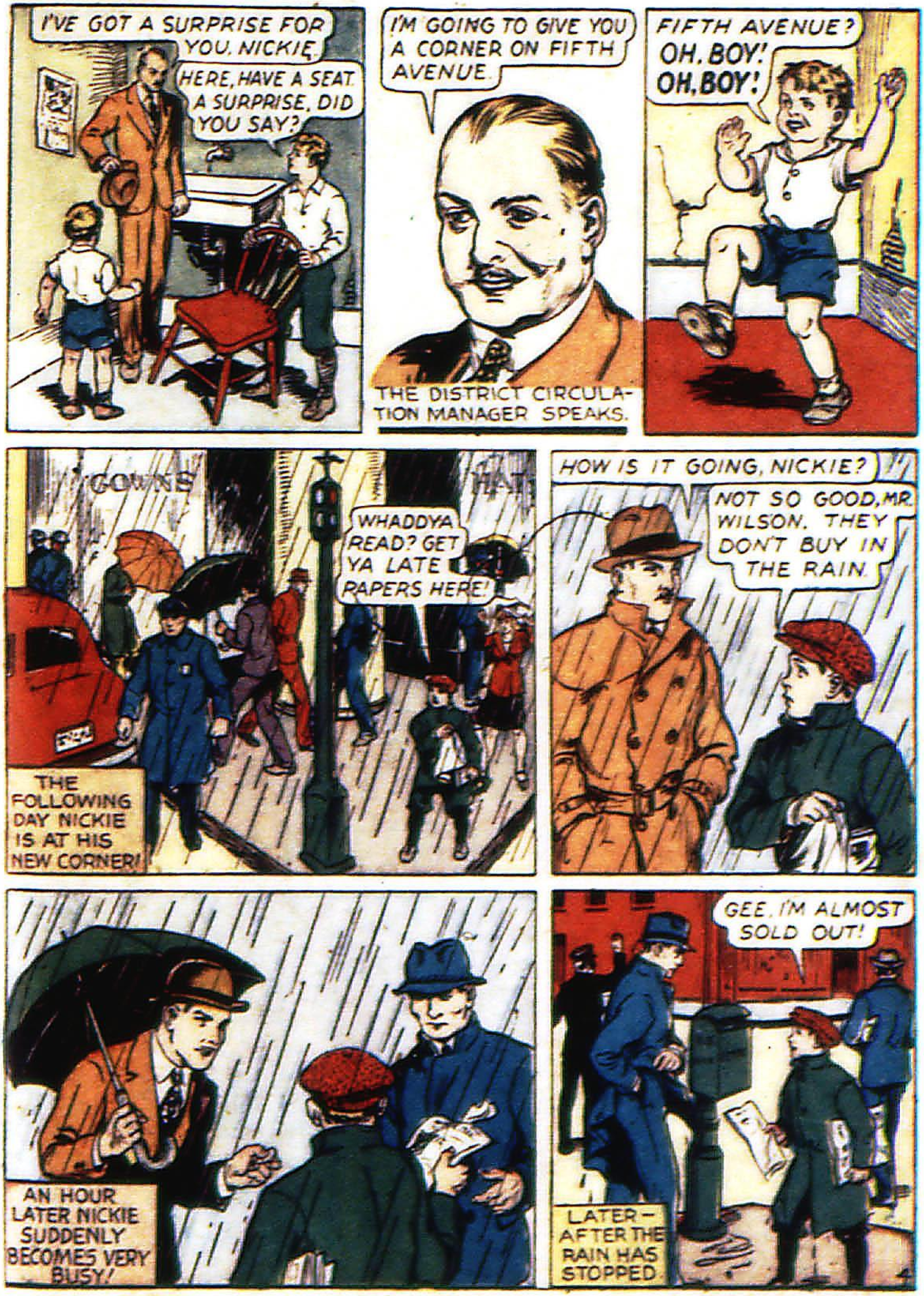
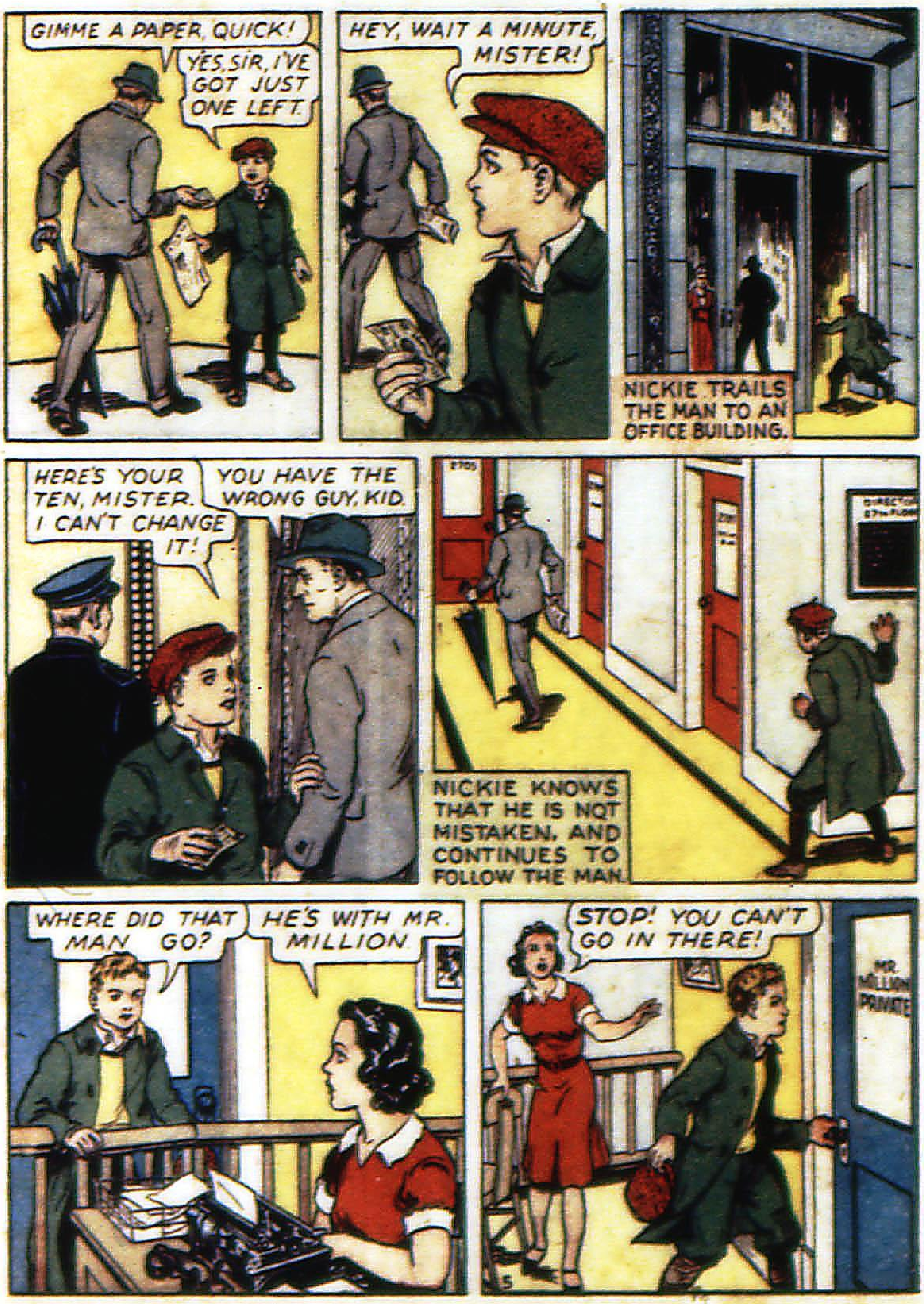
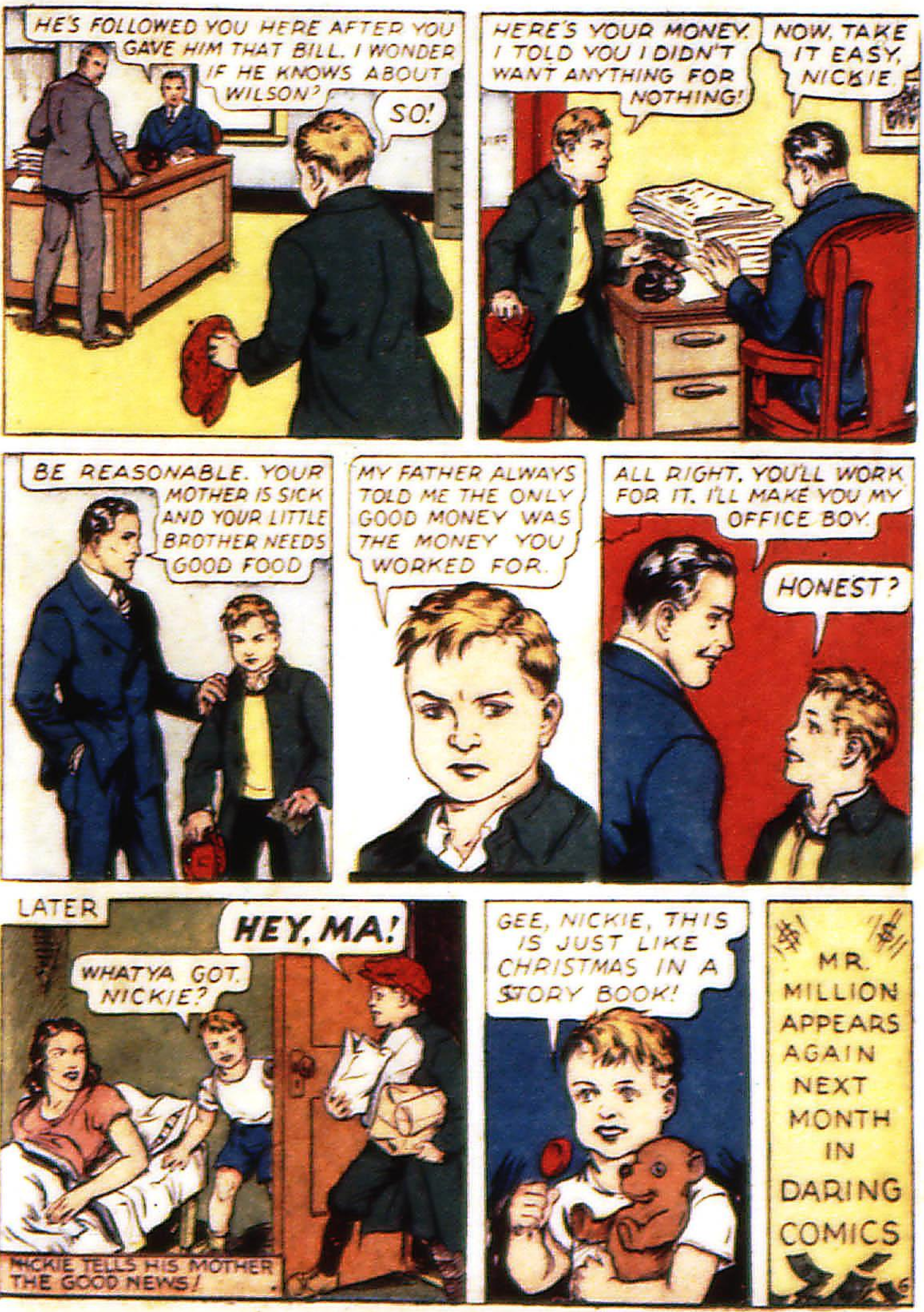

MR. MILLION
—FRIEND OF THE POOR AND PROTECTOR OF THE WEAK, ORDERS HIS CHAUFFEUR TO DRIVE THROUGH A SLUM DISTRICT.
LOANS
STOP HERE A MINUTE!
AS THEY APPROACH AN ELEVATED STRUCTURE A STRANGE SIGHT CATCHES MR MILLION'S EYE.
YOU AINT PAID FOR YOUR PROTECTION THIS WEEK, NICKIE!
I CAN'T. HONEST!
AW. SOCK HIM! HE'S A SISSY! I SEEN HIM WASHIN' DISHES!
YA GONNA PAY UP? YES OR NO?
NO!
THIS'LL CHANGE YER MIND!

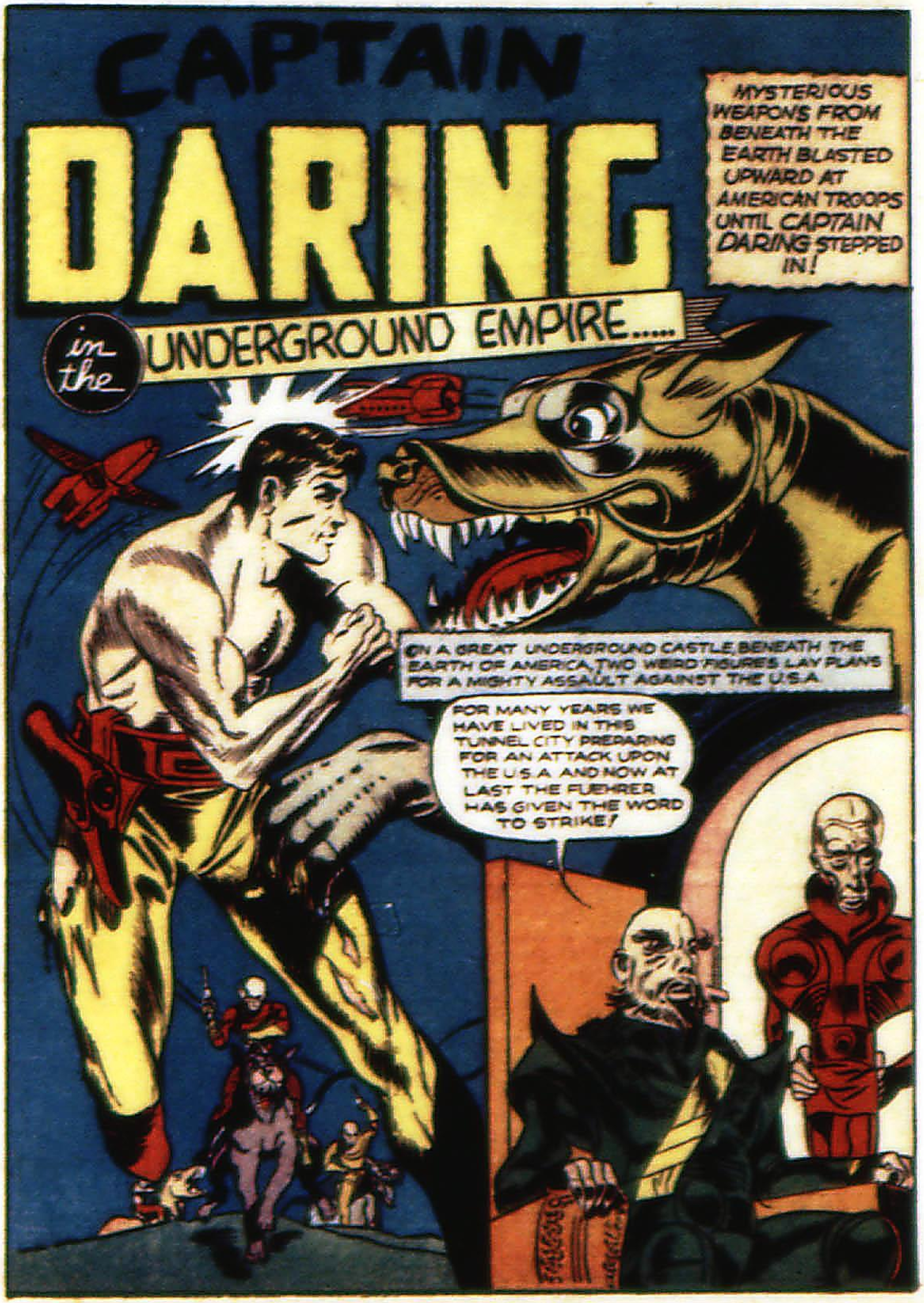

SOMEONE'S GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS!
GET OUT OF HERE— QUICK!
YOU SHOULD'VE KEPT OUTA THIS. NOW THEY WILL THINK I'M A SISSY!
WHAT DO YOU CARE WHAT THEY THINK? HERE, TAKE THIS TO MAKE UP FOR THE PAPERS YOU LOST!
I DON'T WANT ANYTHING FOR NOTHING!
YOU WON'T CHANGE YOUR MIND?
NOPE!
TAKE THE CAR HOME— I WANT TO WALK!
YES, SIR.

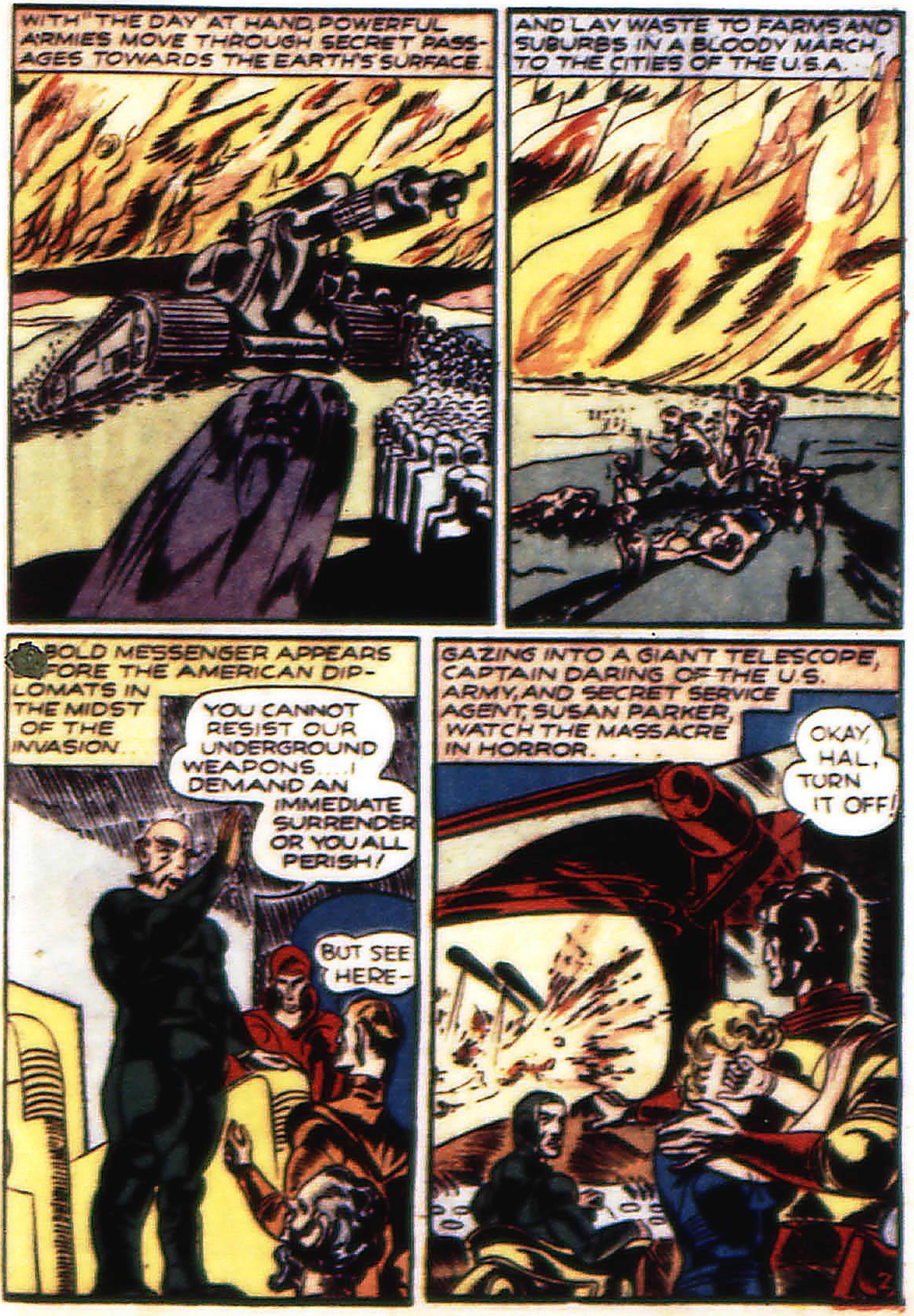

I HOPE I DON'T LOSE HIM.
VOTE
CITY COUNC
MR. MILLION WAITS UNTIL THE BOY SELLS HIS PAPERS— THEN FOLLOWS HIM HOME.
IS THAT YOU, NICKIE?
YES, MA!
THE DOCTOR WAS HERE TODAY.
WHAT DID HE SAY?
HE SAID WE GOTTA GET MA SOME MORE OF THAT MEDICINE.
THERE'S JUST ENOUGH FOR TONIGHT.
AND THEY CALL HIM A SISSY!
A SHADOW SLIPS SILENTLY DOWN THE STAIRS.
LATER THAT NIGHT— NICKIE HAS A VISITOR.
HELLO, MR. WILSON. IS SOMETHING WRONG?

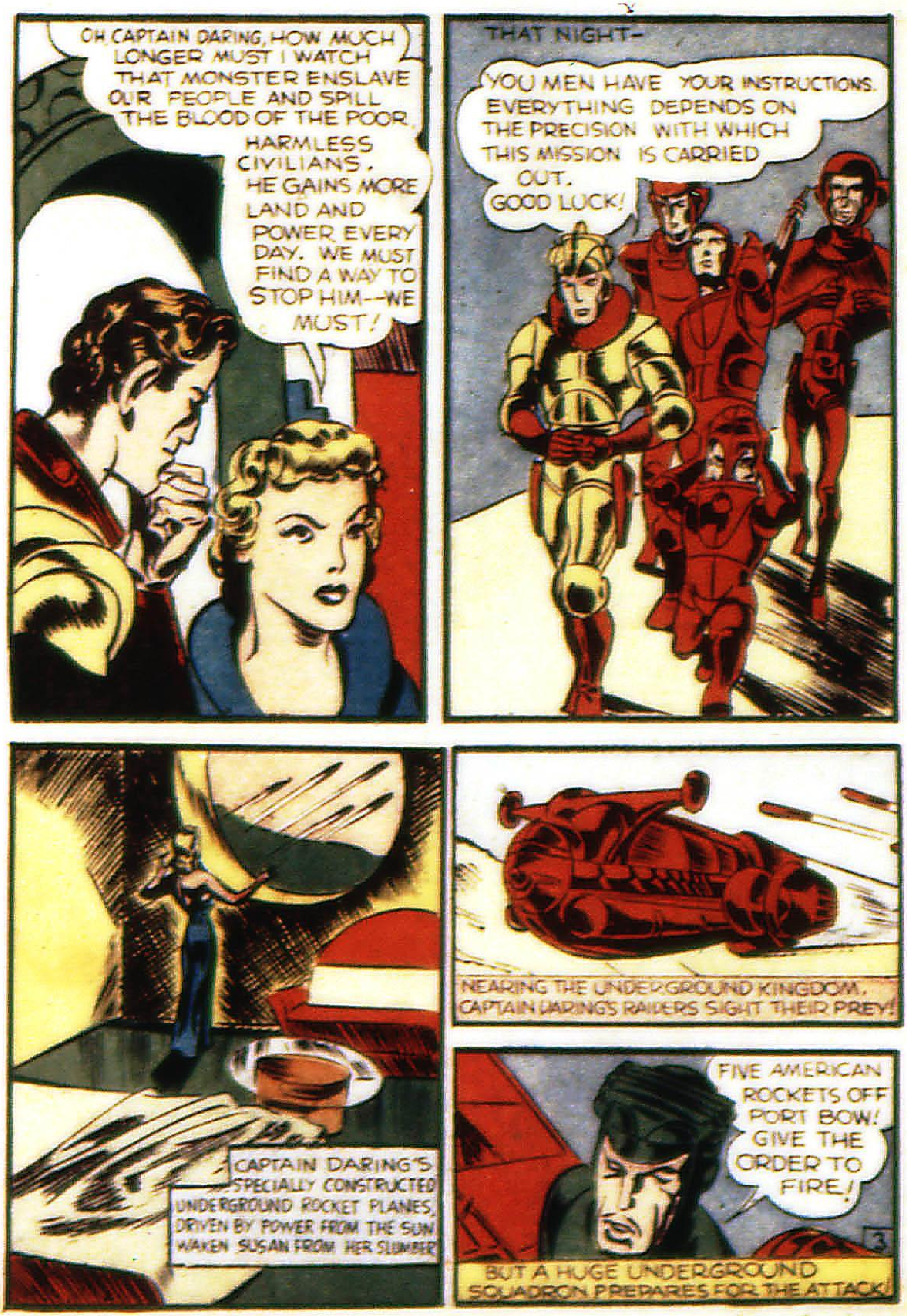

I'VE GOT A SURPRISE FOR YOU, NICKIE.
HERE, HAVE A SEAT.
A SURPRISE, DID YOU SAY?
I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU A CORNER ON FIFTH AVENUE.
THE DISTRICT CIRCULATION MANAGER SPEAKS.
FIFTH AVENUE? OH, BOY! OH, BOY!
GOWNS
HAT
THE FOLLOWING DAY NICKIE IS AT HIS NEW CORNER!
WHADDYA READ? GET YA LATE PAPERS HERE!
HOW IS IT GOING, NICKIE?
NOT SO GOOD, MR. WILSON. THEY DON'T BUY IN THE RAIN.
AN HOUR LATER NICKIE SUDDENLY BECOMES VERY BUSY!
LATER— AFTER THE RAIN HAS STOPPED.
GEE, I'M ALMOST SOLD OUT!

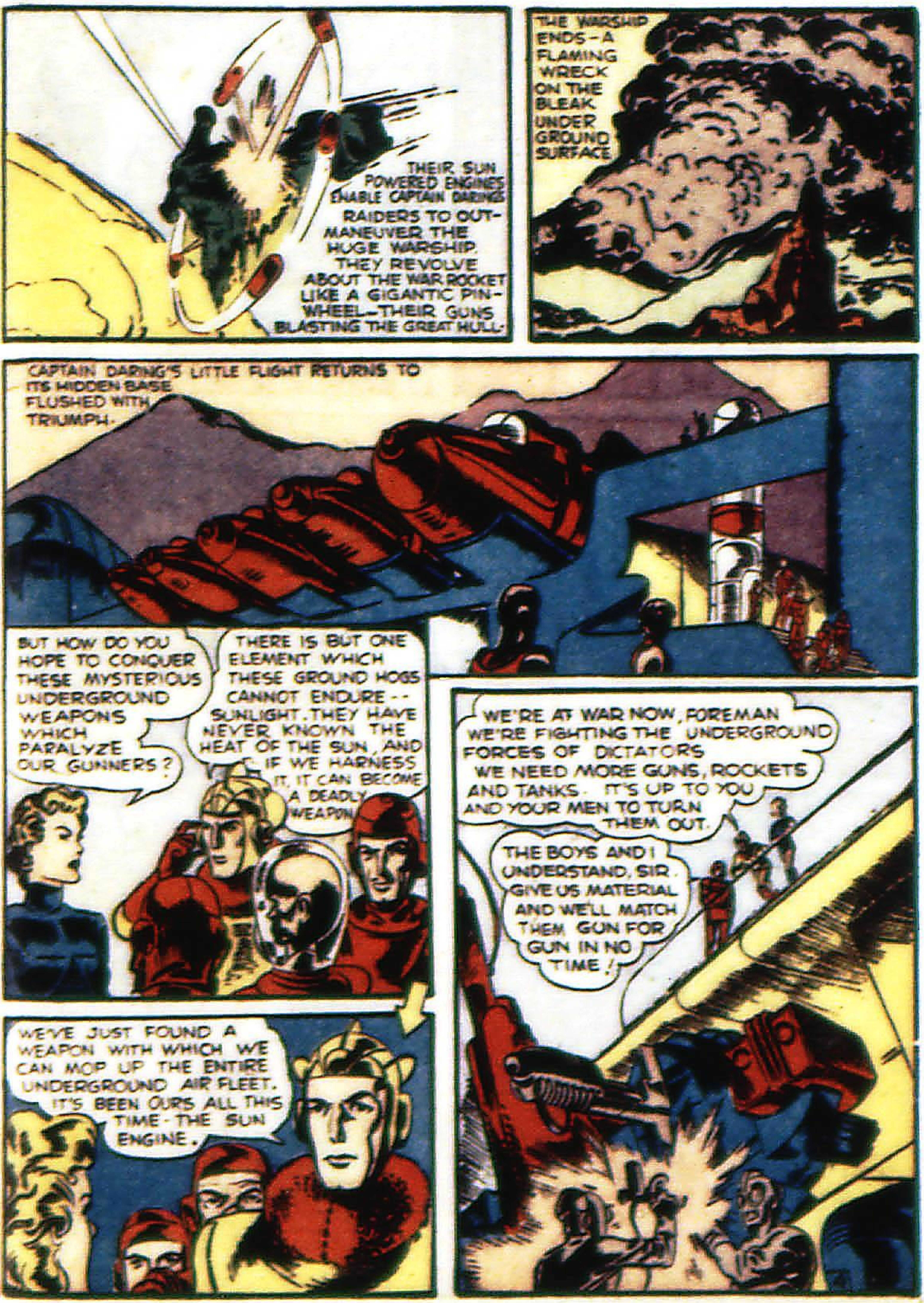

GIMME A PAPER, QUICK!
YES, SIR, I'VE GOT JUST ONE LEFT.
HEY, WAIT A MINUTE, MISTER!
NICKIE TRAILS THE MAN TO AN OFFICE BUILDING.
HERE'S YOUR TEN, MISTER. I CAN'T CHANGE IT!
YOU HAVE THE WRONG GUY, KID.
NICKIE KNOWS THAT HE IS NOT MISTAKEN, AND CONTINUES TO FOLLOW THE MAN.
WHERE DID THAT MAN GO?
HE'S WITH MR. MILLION.
STOP! YOU CAN'T GO IN THERE!
MR. MILLION PRIVATE

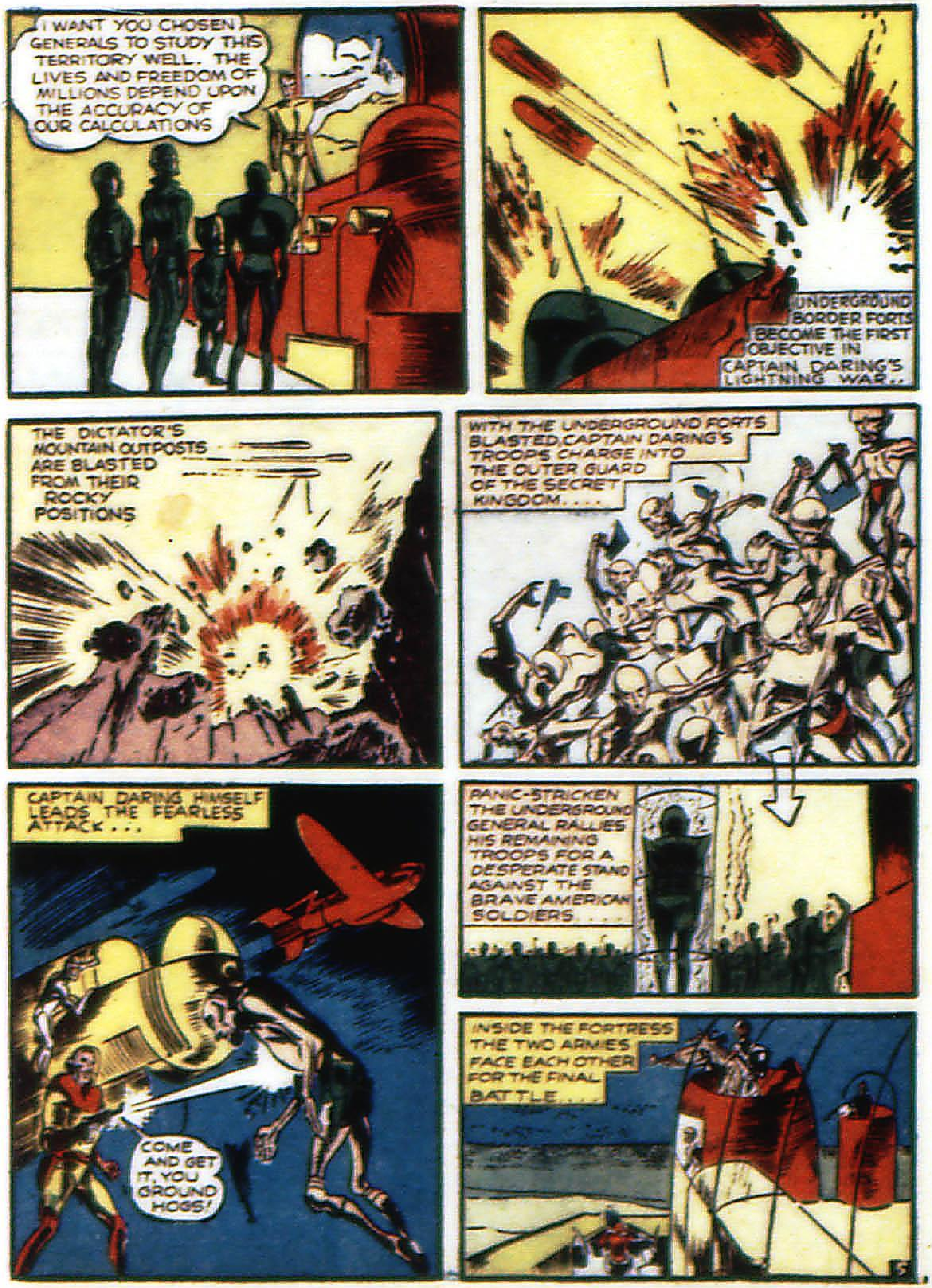

HE'S FOLLOWED YOU HERE AFTER YOU GAVE HIM THAT BILL. I WONDER IF HE KNOWS ABOUT WILSON?
SO!
HERE'S YOUR MONEY. I TOLD YOU I DIDN'T WANT ANYTHING FOR NOTHING!
NOW, TAKE IT EASY, NICKIE.
BE REASONABLE. YOUR MOTHER IS SICK AND YOUR LITTLE BROTHER NEEDS GOOD FOOD
MY FATHER ALWAYS TOLD ME THE ONLY GOOD MONEY WAS THE MONEY YOU WORKED FOR.
ALL RIGHT. YOU'LL WORK FOR IT. I'LL MAKE YOU MY OFFICE BOY.
HONEST?
LATER
HEY, MA!
WHATYA GOT, NICKIE?
NICKIE TELLS HIS MOTHER THE GOOD NEWS!
GEE, NICKIE, THIS IS JUST LIKE CHRISTMAS IN A STORY BOOK!
MR. MILLION APPEARS AGAIN NEXT MONTH IN DARING COMICS
6

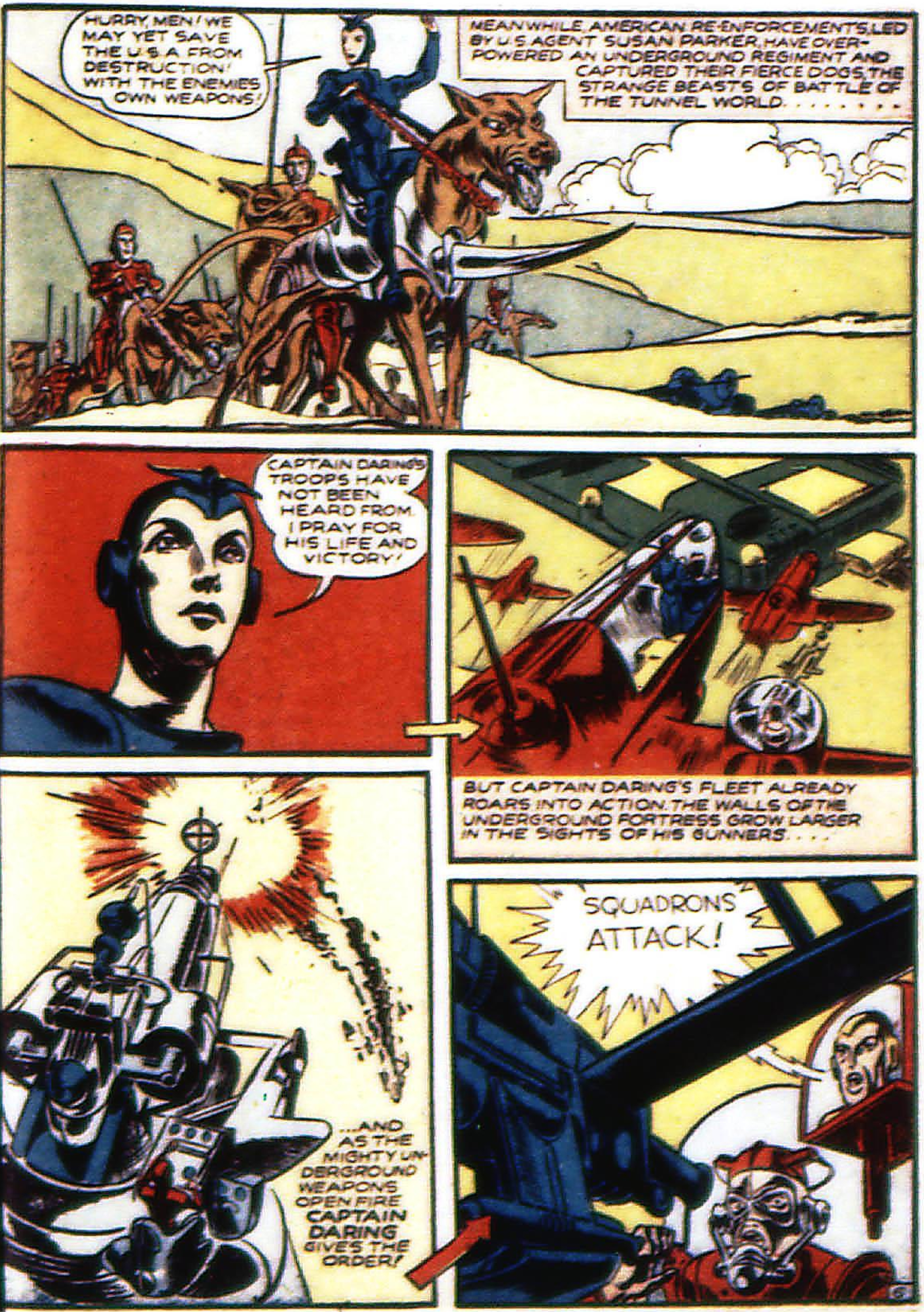

CAPTAIN DARING
in the UNDERGROUND EMPIRE.....
MYSTERIOUS WEAPONS FROM BENEATH THE EARTH BLASTED UPWARD AT AMERICAN TROOPS UNTIL CAPTAIN DARING STEPPED IN!
ON A GREAT UNDERGROUND CASTLE, BENEATH THE EARTH OF AMERICA, TWO WEIRD FIGURES LAY PLANS FOR A MIGHTY ASSAULT AGAINST THE U.S.A.
FOR MANY YEARS WE HAVE LIVED IN THIS TUNNEL CITY PREPARING FOR AN ATTACK UPON THE U.S.A. AND NOW AT LAST THE FUEHRER HAS GIVEN THE WORD TO STRIKE!

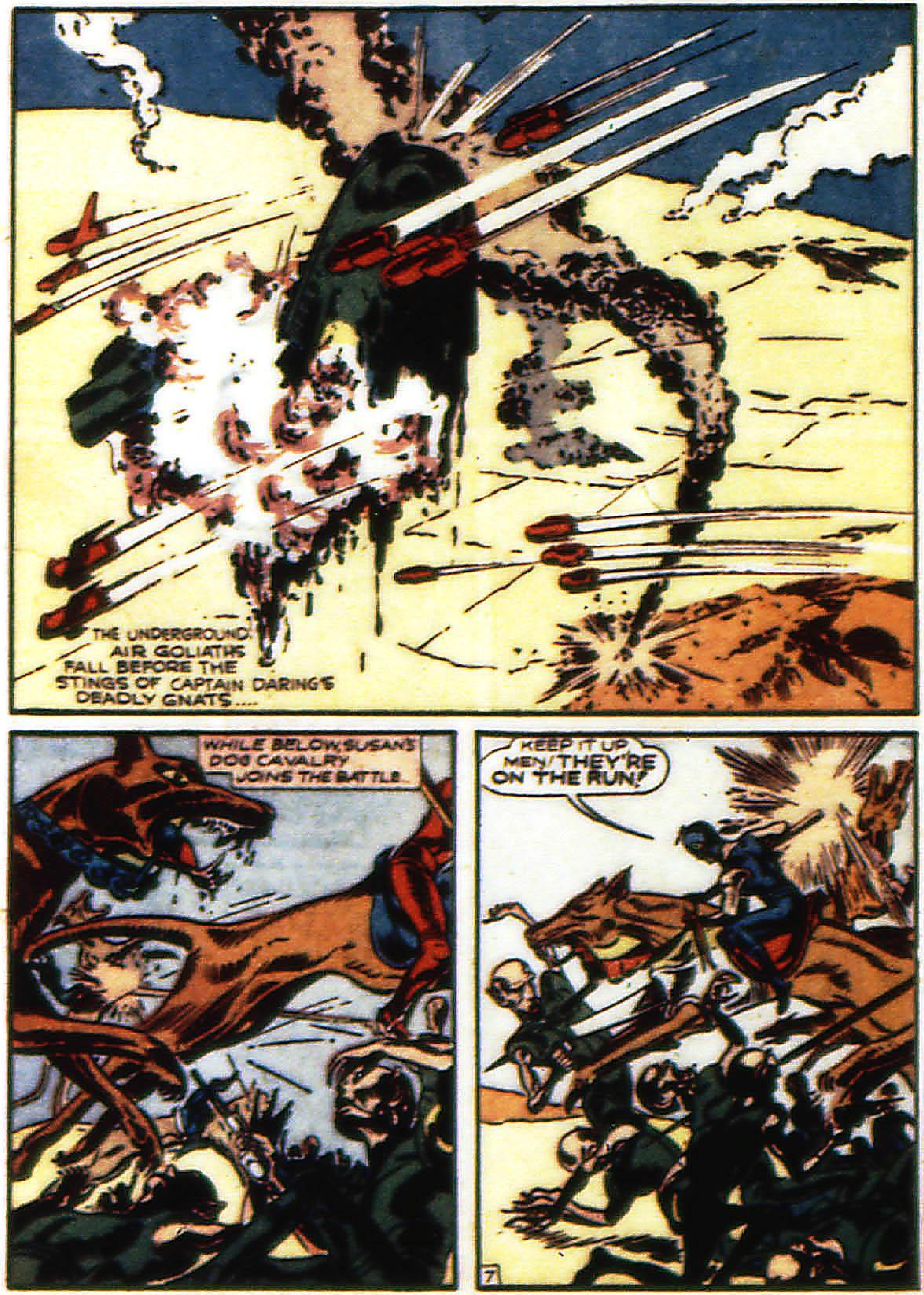

WITH "THE DAY" AT HAND, POWERFUL ARMIES MOVE THROUGH SECRET PASSAGES TOWARDS THE EARTH'S SURFACE.
AND LAY WASTE TO FARMS AND SUBURBS IN A BLOODY MARCH TO THE CITIES OF THE U.S.A. . .
[illegible] BOLD MESSENGER APPEARS [illegible]FORE THE AMERICAN DIPLOMATS IN THE MIDST OF THE INVASION...
YOU CANNOT RESIST OUR UNDERGROUND WEAPONS....I DEMAND AN IMMEDIATE SURRENDER OR YOU ALL PERISH!
BUT SEE HERE-
GAZING INTO A GIANT TELESCOPE, CAPTAIN DARING OF THE U.S. ARMY, AND SECRET SERVICE AGENT, SUSAN PARKER, WATCH THE MASSACRE IN HORROR. . . .
OKAY, HAL, TURN IT OFF!

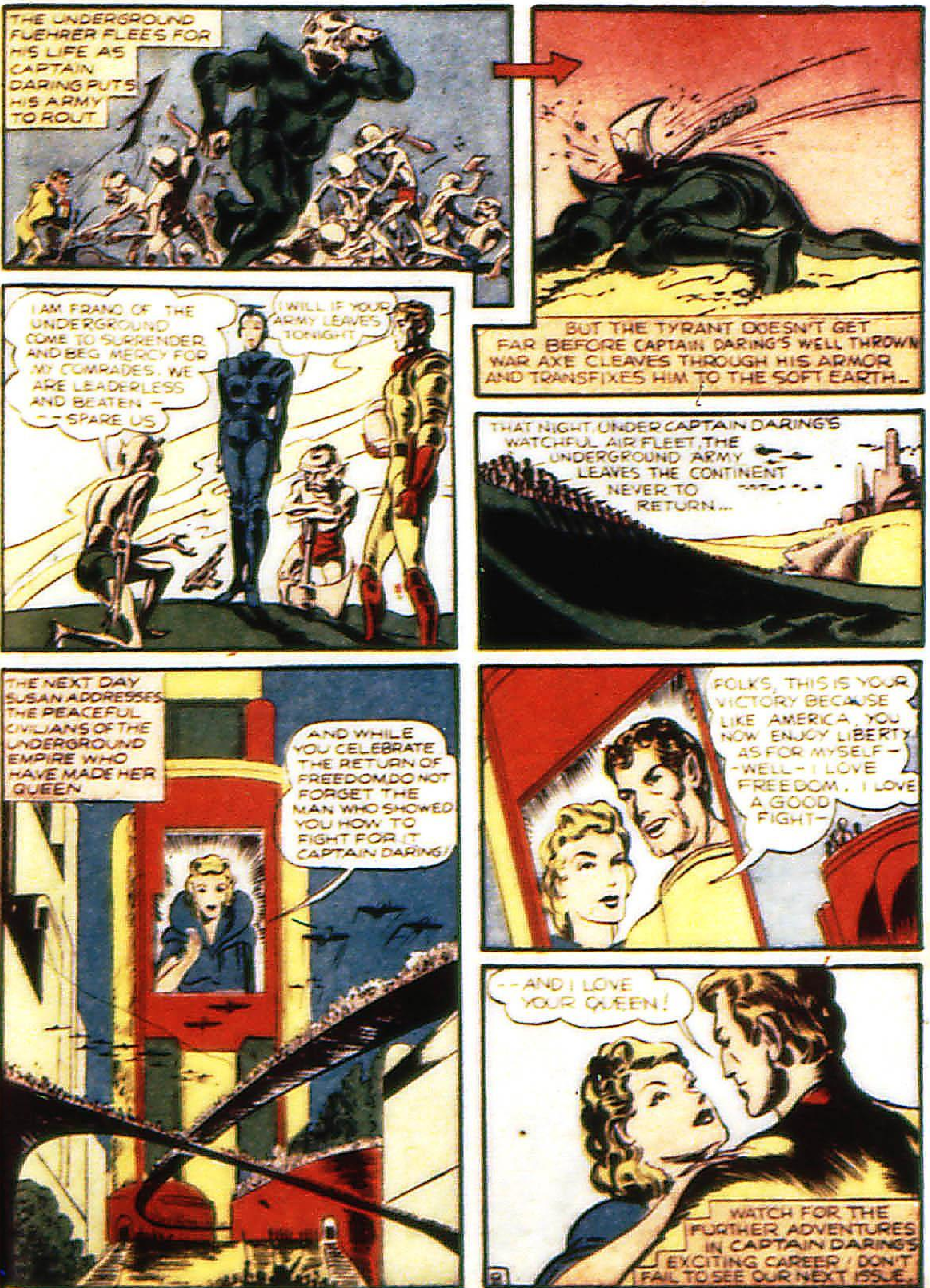

OH CAPTAIN DARING, HOW MUCH LONGER MUST I WATCH THAT MONSTER ENSLAVE OUR PEOPLE AND SPILL THE BLOOD OF THE POOR, HARMLESS CIVILIANS. HE GAINS MORE LAND AND POWER EVERY DAY. WE MUST FIND A WAY TO STOP HIM--WE MUST!
THAT NIGHT-
YOU MEN HAVE YOUR INSTRUCTIONS. EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON THE PRECISION WITH WHICH THIS MISSION IS CARRIED OUT. GOOD LUCK!
CAPTAIN DARING'S SPECIALLY CONSTRUCTED UNDERGROUND ROCKET PLANES, DRIVEN BY POWER FROM THE SUN WAKEN SUSAN FROM HER SLUMBER
NEARING THE UNDERGROUND KINGDOM, CAPTAIN DARING'S RAIDERS SIGHT THEIR PREY!
FIVE AMERICAN ROCKETS OFF PORT BOW! GIVE THE ORDER TO FIRE!
BUT A HUGE UNDERGROUND SQUADRON PREPARES FOR THE ATTACK!


THEIR SUN POWERED ENGINES ENABLE CAPTAIN DARINGS RAIDERS TO OUT-MANEUVER THE HUGE WARSHIP. THEY REVOLVE ABOUT THE WAR ROCKET LIKE A GIGANTIC PIN-WHEEL—THEIR GUNS BLASTING THE GREAT HULL-
THE WARSHIP ENDS-A FLAMING WRECK ON THE BLEAK UNDER GROUND SURFACE
CAPTAIN DARING'S LITTLE FLIGHT RETURNS TO ITS HIDDEN BASE FLUSHED WITH TRIUMPH.
BUT HOW DO YOU HOPE TO CONQUER THESE MYSTERIOUS UNDERGROUND WEAPONS WHICH PARALYZE OUR GUNNERS?
THERE IS BUT ONE ELEMENT WHICH THESE GROUND HOGS CANNOT ENDURE-- SUNLIGHT. THEY HAVE NEVER KNOWN THE HEAT OF THE SUN, AND IF WE HARNESS IT, IT CAN BECOME A DEADLY WEAPON!
WE'RE AT WAR NOW, FOREMAN WE'RE FIGHTING THE UNDERGROUND FORCES OF DICTATORS WE NEED MORE GUNS, ROCKETS AND TANKS. IT'S UP TO YOU AND YOUR MEN TO TURN THEM OUT.
THE BOYS AND I UNDERSTAND, SIR. GIVE US MATERIAL AND WE'LL MATCH THEM GUN FOR GUN IN NO TIME!
WE'VE JUST FOUND A WEAPON WITH WHICH WE CAN MOP UP THE ENTIRE UNDERGROUND AIR FLEET. IT'S BEEN OURS ALL THIS TIME - THE SUN ENGINE.


I WANT YOU CHOSEN GENERALS TO STUDY THIS TERRITORY WELL. THE LIVES AND FREEDOM OF MILLIONS DEPEND UPON THE ACCURACY OF OUR CALCULATIONS
UNDERGROUND BORDER FORTS BECOME THE FIRST OBJECTIVE IN CAPTAIN DARING'S LIGHTNING WAR..
THE DICTATOR'S MOUNTAIN OUTPOSTS ARE BLASTED FROM THEIR ROCKY POSITIONS
WITH THE UNDERGROUND FORTS BLASTED, CAPTAIN DARING'S TROOPS CHARGE INTO THE OUTER GUARD OF THE SECRET KINGDOM . . .
CAPTAIN DARING HIMSELF LEADS THE FEARLESS ATTACK . . .
COME AND GET IT, YOU GROUND HOGS!
PANIC-STRICKEN THE UNDERGROUND GENERAL RALLIES HIS REMAINING TROOPS FOR A DESPERATE STAND AGAINST THE BRAVE AMERICAN SOLDIERS . . .
INSIDE THE FORTRESS THE TWO ARMIES FACE EACH OTHER FOR THE FINAL BATTLE . . .
5


HURRY, MEN! WE MAY YET SAVE THE U.S.A. FROM DESTRUCTION! WITH THE ENEMIES OWN WEAPONS!
MEANWHILE, AMERICAN RE-ENFORCEMENTS, LED BY U.S. AGENT SUSAN PARKER, HAVE OVERPOWERED AN UNDERGROUND REGIMENT AND CAPTURED THEIR FIERCE DOGS, THE STRANGE BEASTS OF BATTLE OF THE TUNNEL WORLD . . . .
CAPTAIN DARING'S TROOPS HAVE NOT BEEN HEARD FROM. I PRAY FOR HIS LIFE AND VICTORY!
BUT CAPTAIN DARING'S FLEET ALREADY ROARS INTO ACTION. THE WALLS OF THE UNDERGROUND FORTRESS GROW LARGER IN THE SIGHTS OF HIS GUNNERS . . .
...AND AS THE MIGHTY UNDERGROUND WEAPONS OPEN FIRE CAPTAIN DARING GIVES THE ORDER!
SQUADRONS ATTACK!


THE UNDERGROUND AIR GOLIATHS FALL BEFORE THE STINGS OF CAPTAIN DARING'S DEADLY GNATS....
WHILE BELOW, SUSAN'S DOG CAVALRY JOINS THE BATTLE...
KEEP IT UP MEN! THEY'RE ON THE RUN!


THE UNDERGROUND FUEHRER FLEES FOR HIS LIFE AS CAPTAIN DARING PUTS HIS ARMY TO ROUT.
BUT THE TYRANT DOESN'T GET FAR BEFORE CAPTAIN DARING'S WELL THROWN WAR AXE CLEAVES THROUGH HIS ARMOR AND TRANSFIXES HIM TO THE SOFT EARTH...
I AM FRANO OF THE UNDERGROUND COME TO SURRENDER AND BEG MERCY FOR MY COMRADES. WE ARE LEADERLESS AND BEATEN — — SPARE US
I WILL IF YOUR ARMY LEAVES TONIGHT —
THAT NIGHT, UNDER CAPTAIN DARING'S WATCHFUL AIR FLEET, THE UNDERGROUND ARMY LEAVES THE CONTINENT NEVER TO RETURN...
THE NEXT DAY SUSAN ADDRESSES THE PEACEFUL CIVILIANS OF THE UNDERGROUND EMPIRE WHO HAVE MADE HER QUEEN.
AND WHILE YOU CELEBRATE THE RETURN OF FREEDOM, DO NOT FORGET THE MAN WHO SHOWED YOU HOW TO FIGHT FOR IT CAPTAIN DARING!
FOLKS, THIS IS YOUR VICTORY BECAUSE LIKE AMERICA, YOU NOW ENJOY LIBERTY. AS FOR MYSELF — — WELL — I LOVE FREEDOM. I LOVE A GOOD FIGHT —
— — AND I LOVE YOUR QUEEN!
WATCH FOR THE FURTHER ADVENTURES IN CAPTAIN DARING'S EXCITING CAREER! DON'T FAIL TO SEE OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Ahoy Mates -

Spring Issue No. 1.

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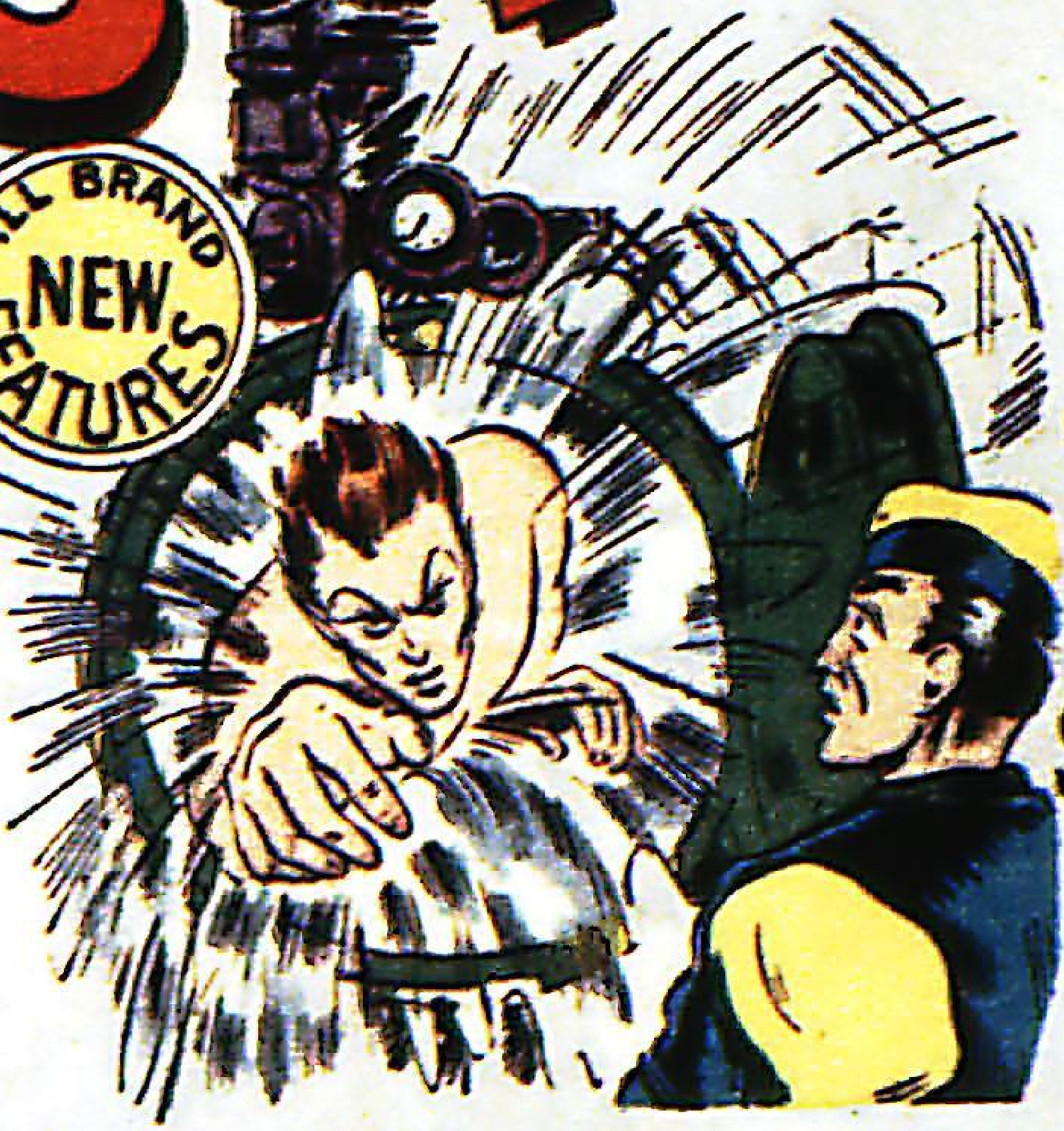

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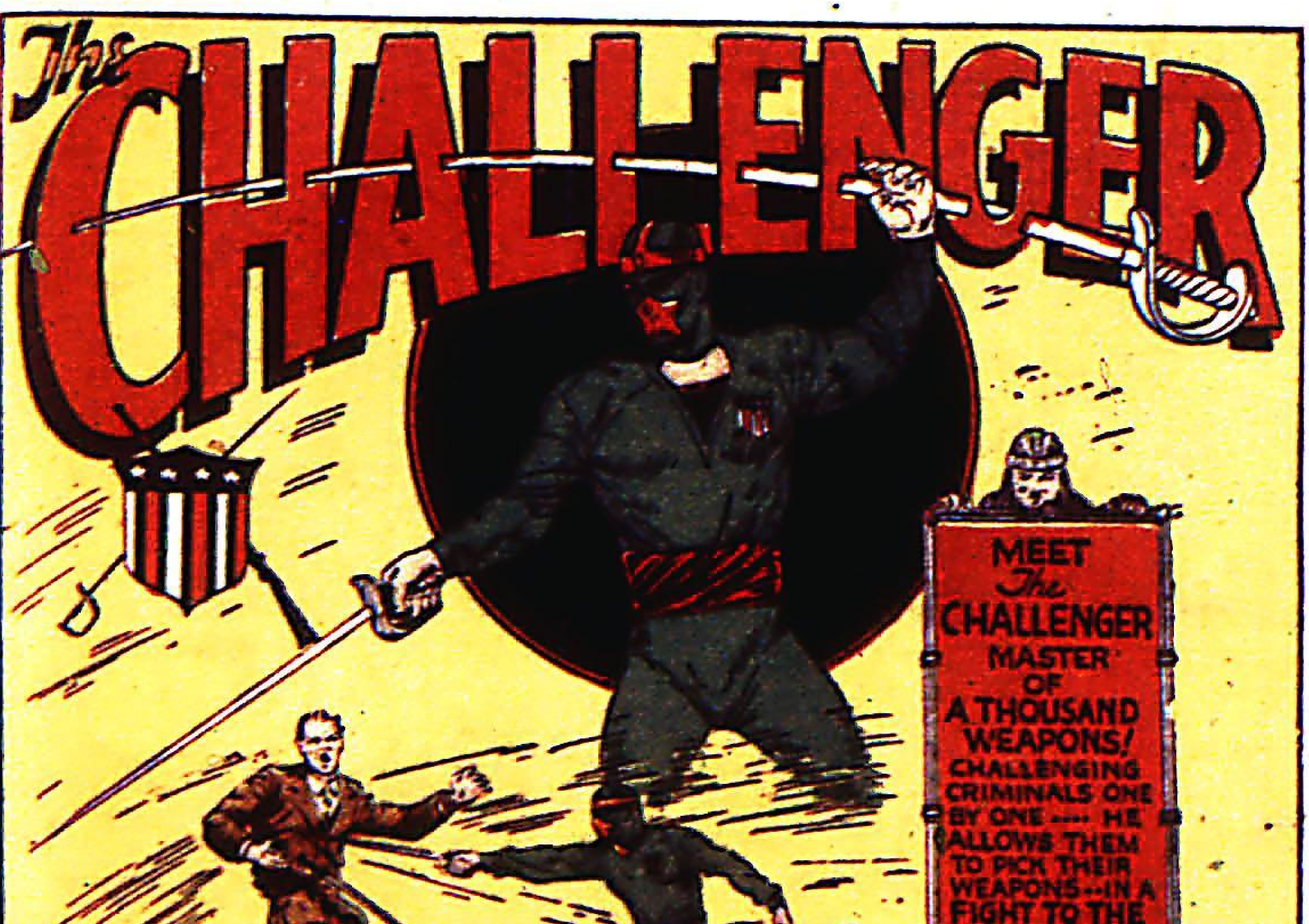
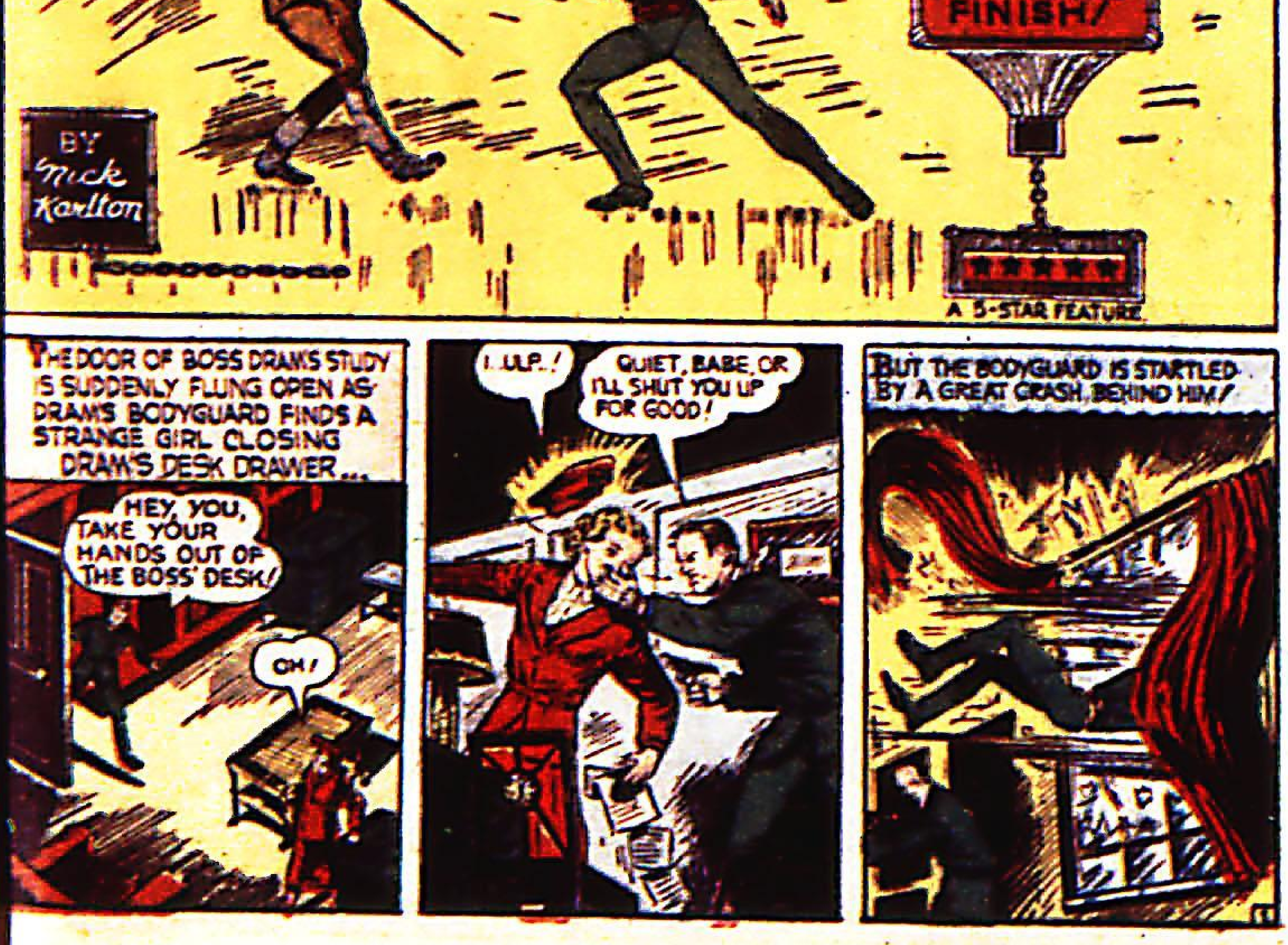
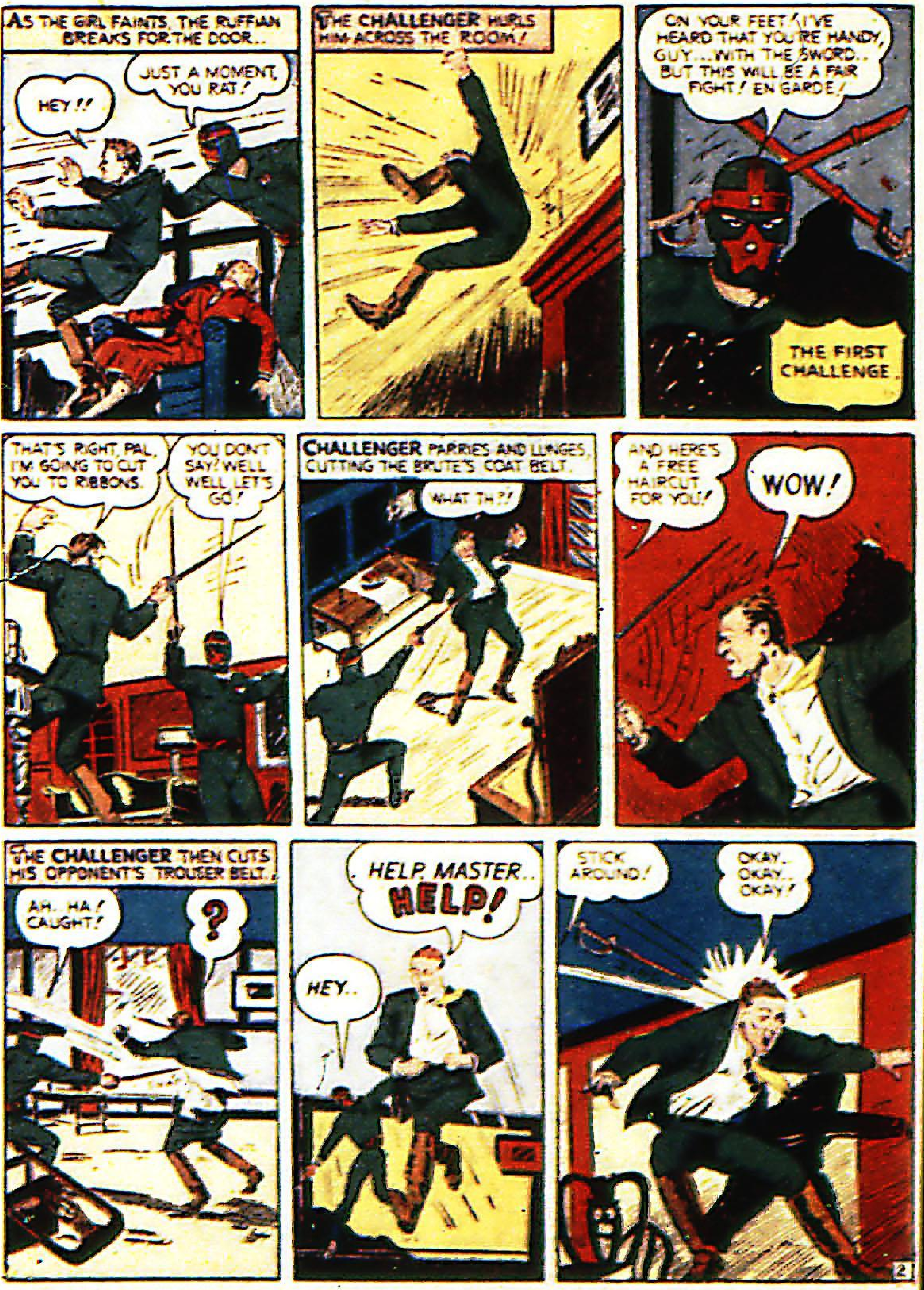
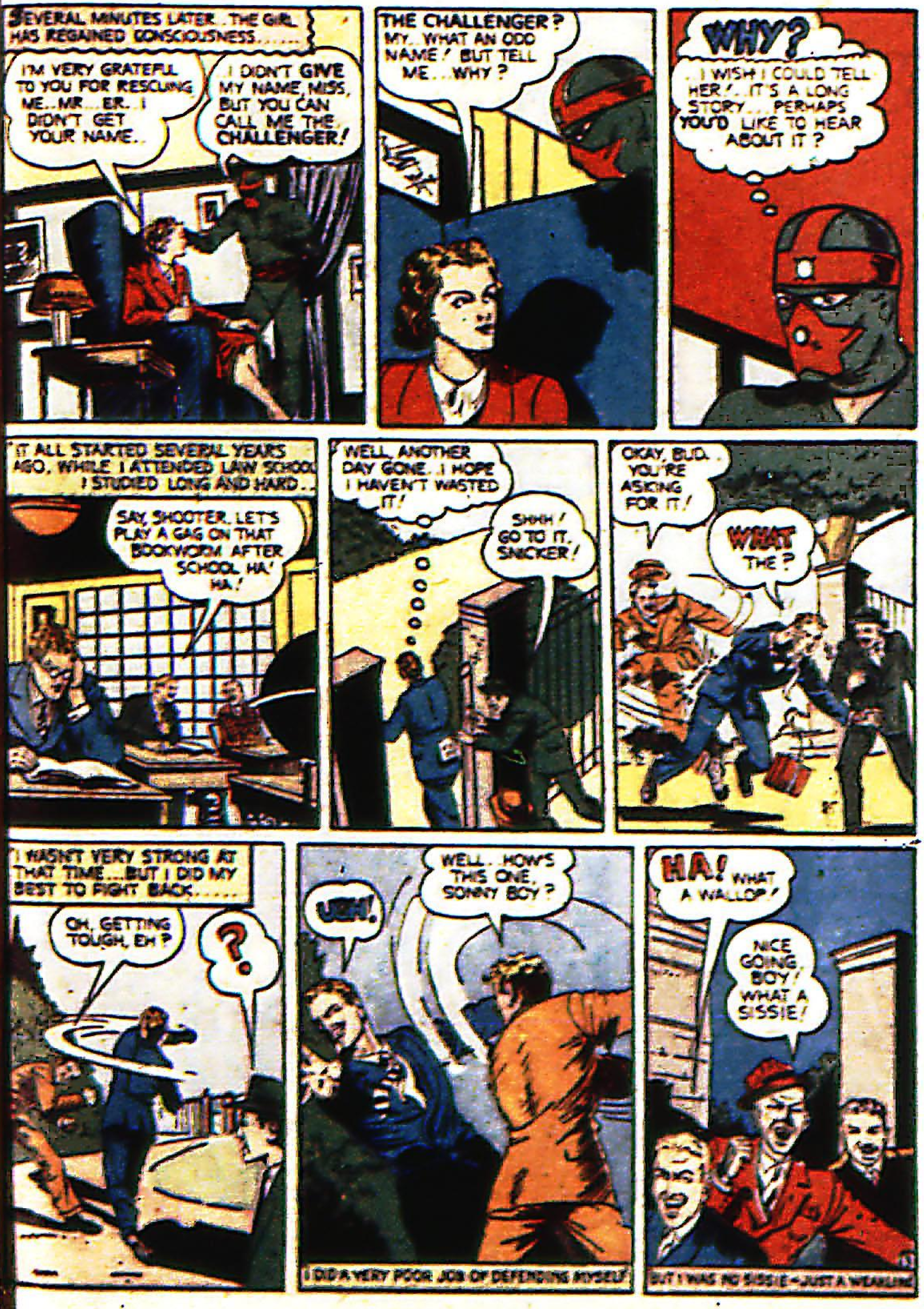
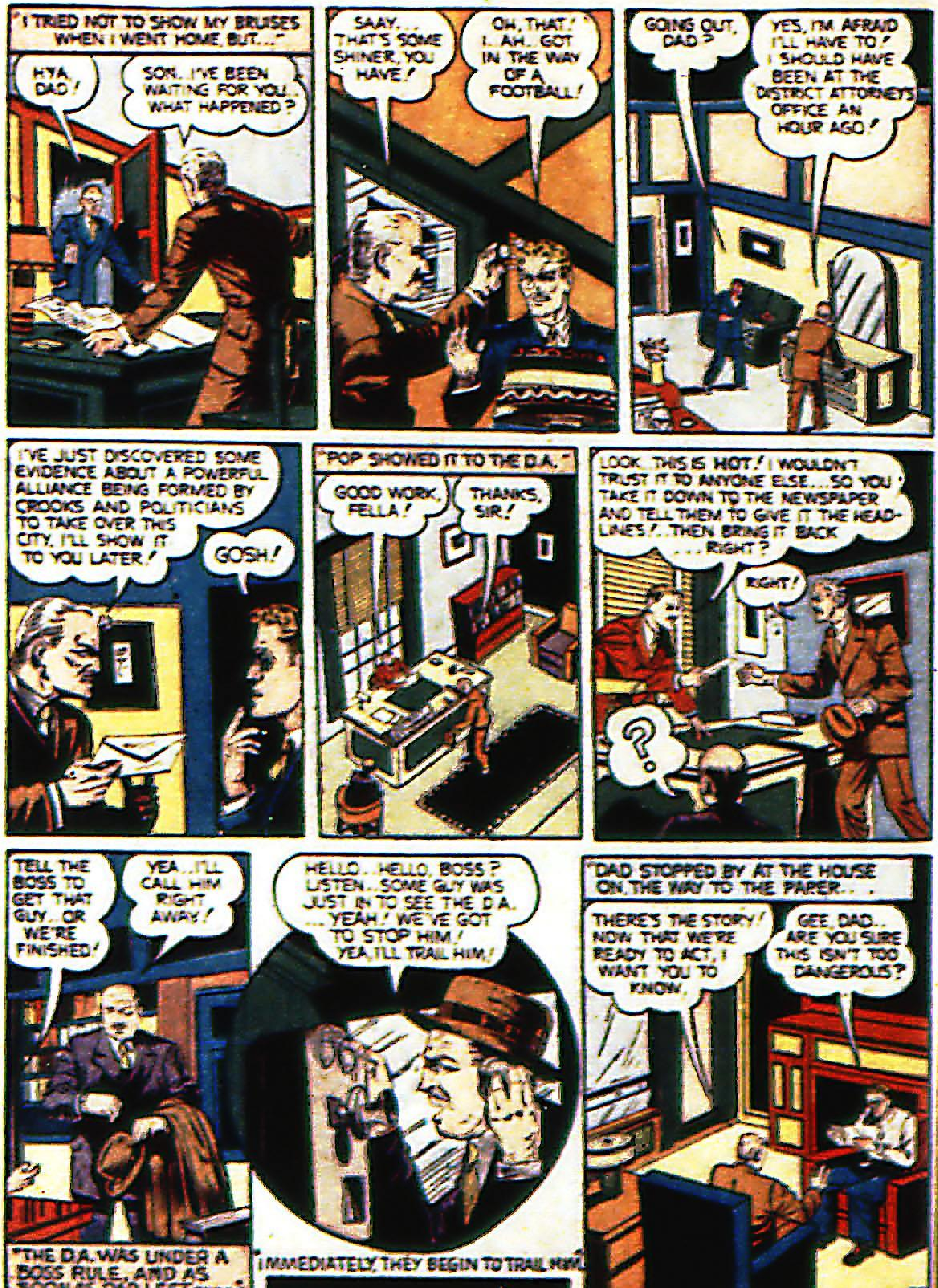
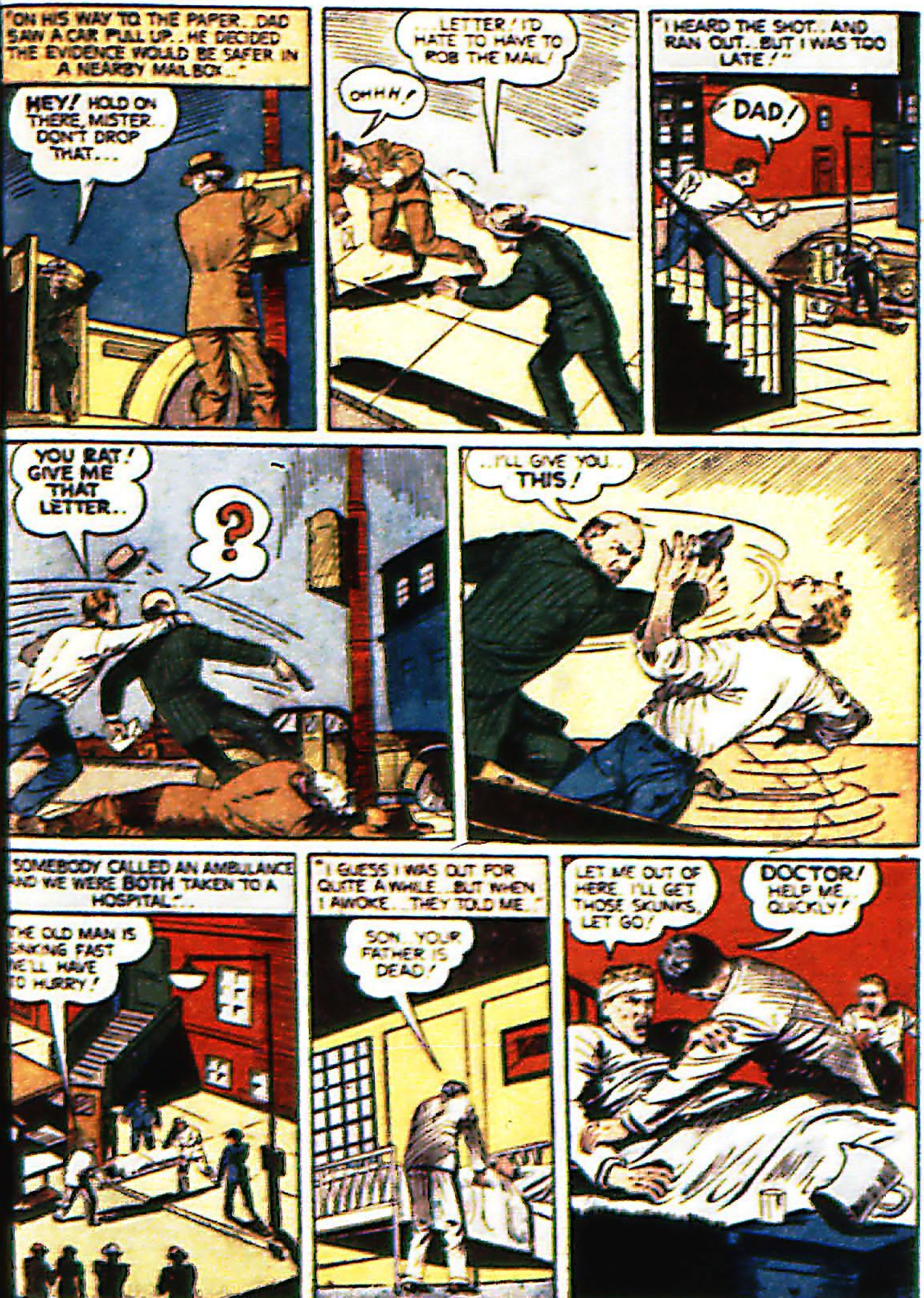

The CHALLENGER
MEET The CHALLENGER MASTER OF A THOUSAND WEAPONS! CHALLENGING CRIMINALS ONE BY ONE .... HE ALLOWS THEM TO PICK THEIR WEAPONS -- IN A FIGHT TO THE FINISH!
BY Nick Karlton
A 5-STAR FEATURE

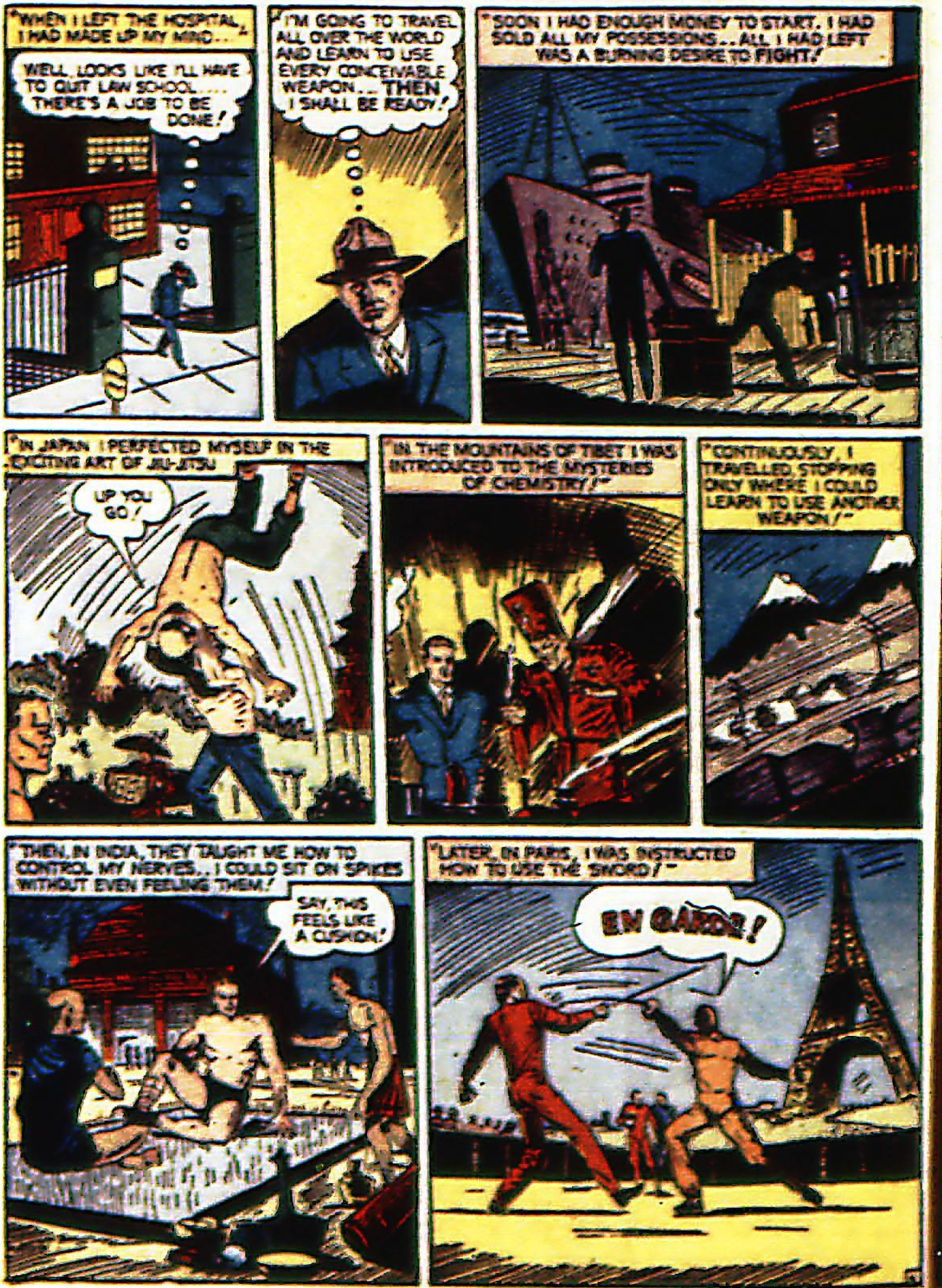

THE DOOR OF BOSS DRAM'S STUDY IS SUDDENLY FLUNG OPEN AS DRAM'S BODYGUARD FINDS A STRANGE GIRL CLOSING DRAM'S DESK DRAWER...
HEY, YOU, TAKE YOUR HANDS OUT OF THE BOSS' DESK!
OH!
I...ULP..!
QUIET, BABE, OR I'LL SHUT YOU UP FOR GOOD!
BUT THE BODYGUARD IS STARTLED BY A GREAT CRASH BEHIND HIM!

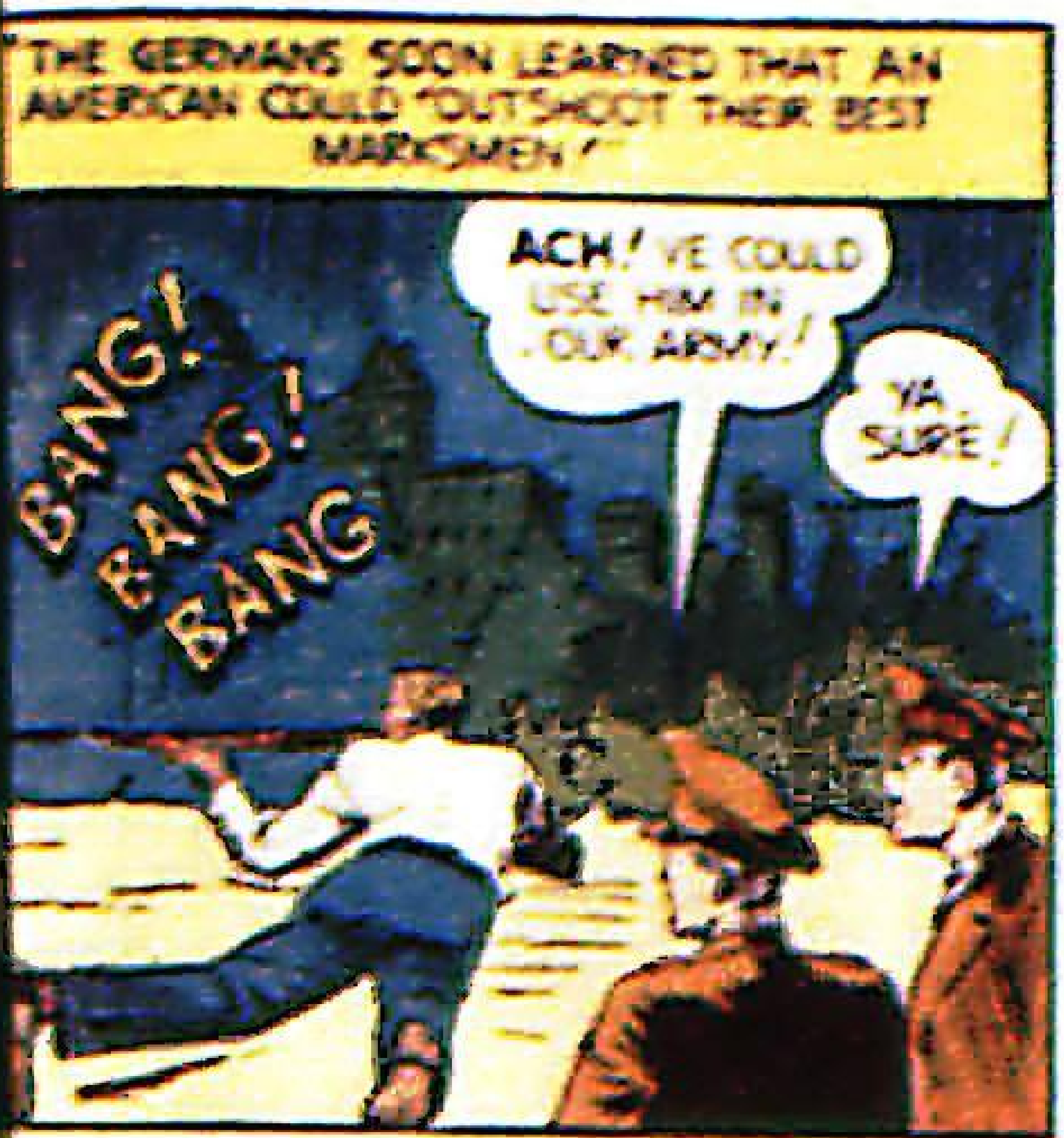

AS THE GIRL FAINTS, THE RUFFIAN BREAKS FOR THE DOOR..
JUST A MOMENT, YOU RAT!
HEY!!
THE CHALLENGER HURLS HIM ACROSS THE ROOM!
ON YOUR FEET! I'VE HEARD THAT YOU'RE HANDY, GUY...WITH THE SWORD.. BUT THIS WILL BE A FAIR FIGHT! EN GARDE!
THE FIRST CHALLENGE
THAT'S RIGHT, PAL, I'M GOING TO CUT YOU TO RIBBONS.
YOU DON'T SAY! WELL WELL LET'S GO!
CHALLENGER PARRIES AND LUNGES, CUTTING THE BRUTE'S COAT BELT.
WHAT TH?!
AND HERE'S A FREE HAIRCUT FOR YOU!
WOW!
THE CHALLENGER THEN CUTS HIS OPPONENT'S TROUSER BELT.
AH. HA! CAUGHT!
?
HELP, MASTER.. HELP!
HEY..
STICK AROUND!
OKAY.. OKAY.. OKAY!

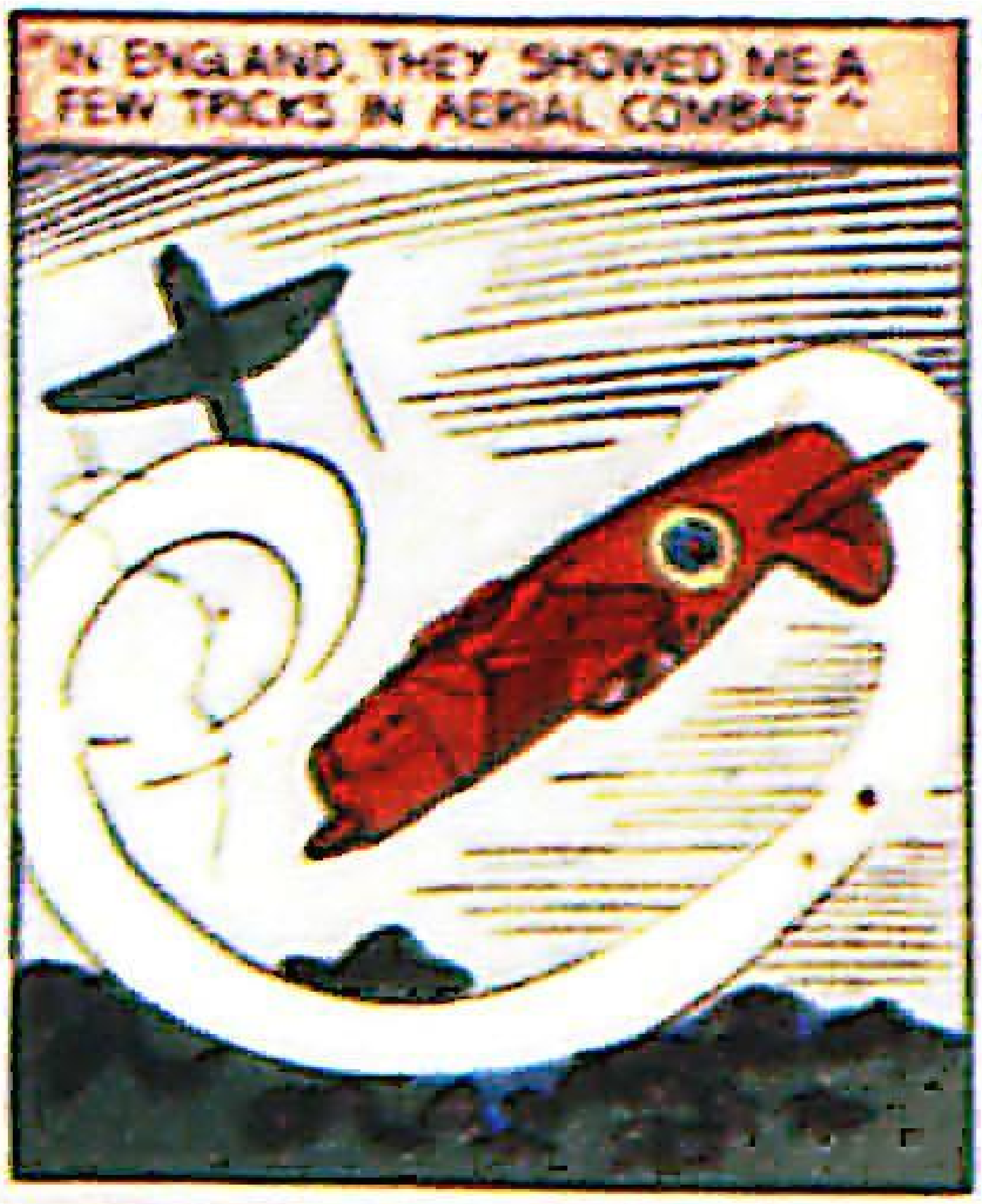

SEVERAL MINUTES LATER...THE GIRL HAS REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS......
I'M VERY GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR RESCUING ME...MR...ER...I DIDN'T GET YOUR NAME...
...I DIDN'T GIVE MY NAME, MISS, BUT YOU CAN CALL ME THE CHALLENGER!
THE CHALLENGER? MY...WHAT AN ODD NAME! BUT TELL ME...WHY?
WHY?
...I WISH I COULD TELL HER!...IT'S A LONG STORY... PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT IT?
"IT ALL STARTED SEVERAL YEARS AGO, WHILE I ATTENDED LAW SCHOOL I STUDIED LONG AND HARD...
SAY, SHOOTER, LET'S PLAY A GAG ON THAT BOOKWORM AFTER SCHOOL HA! HA!
WELL, ANOTHER DAY GONE...I HOPE I HAVEN'T WASTED IT!
SHHH! GO TO IT, SNICKER!
OKAY, BUD... YOU'RE ASKING FOR IT!
WHAT THE?
I WASN'T VERY STRONG AT THAT TIME...BUT I DID MY BEST TO FIGHT BACK.....
OH, GETTING TOUGH, EH?
?
UGH!
WELL...HOW'S THIS ONE, SONNY BOY?
I DID A VERY POOR JOB OF DEFENDING MYSELF
HA! WHAT A WALLOP!
NICE GOING, BOY! WHAT A SISSIE!
BUT I WAS NO SISSIE — JUST A WEAKLING

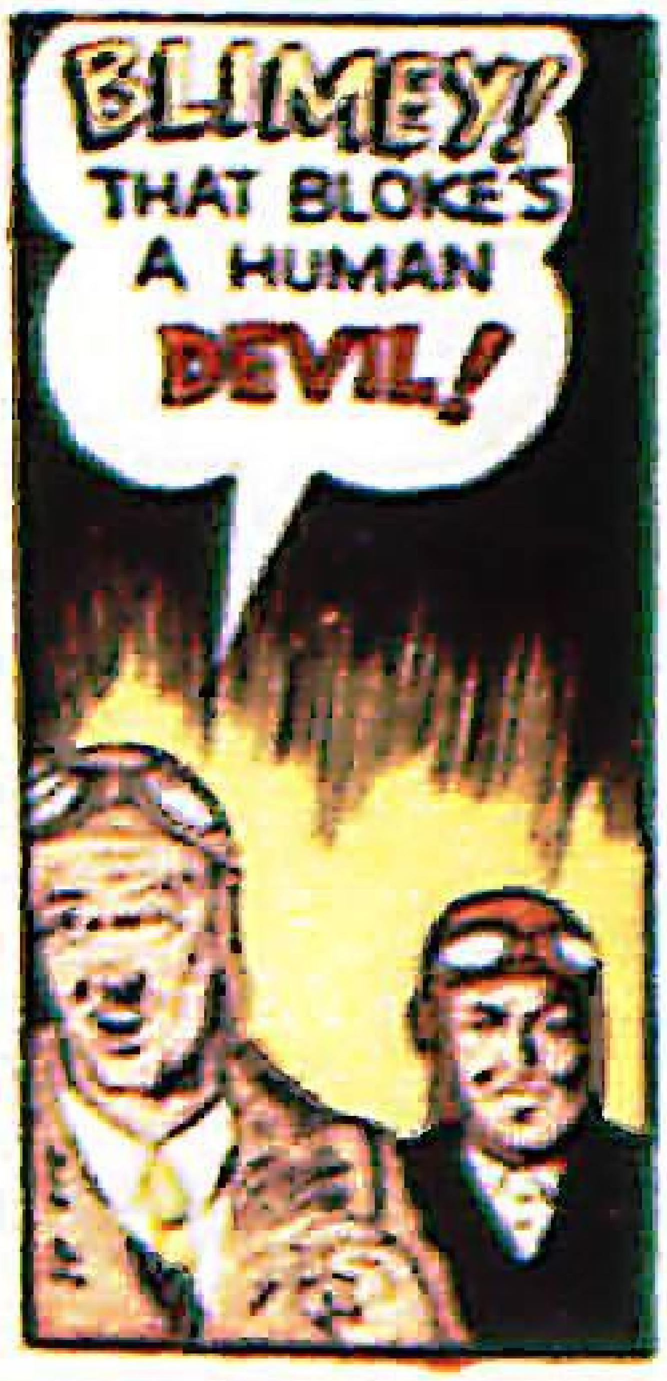

"I TRIED NOT TO SHOW MY BRUISES WHEN I WENT HOME, BUT..."
HYA, DAD!
SON, I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.. WHAT HAPPENED?
SAAY... THAT'S SOME SHINER, YOU HAVE!
OH, THAT! I.. AH.. GOT IN THE WAY OF A FOOTBALL!
GOING OUT, DAD?
YES, I'M AFRAID I'LL HAVE TO! I SHOULD HAVE BEEN AT THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AN HOUR AGO!
I'VE JUST DISCOVERED SOME EVIDENCE ABOUT A POWERFUL ALLIANCE BEING FORMED BY CROOKS AND POLITICIANS TO TAKE OVER THIS CITY. I'LL SHOW IT TO YOU LATER!
GOSH!
"POP SHOWED IT TO THE D.A."
GOOD WORK, FELLA!
THANKS, SIR!
LOOK.. THIS IS HOT! I WOULDN'T TRUST IT TO ANYONE ELSE... SO YOU TAKE IT DOWN TO THE NEWSPAPER AND TELL THEM TO GIVE IT THE HEADLINES!.. THEN BRING IT BACK ... RIGHT?
RIGHT!
?
TELL THE BOSS TO GET THAT GUY... OR WE'RE FINISHED!
YEA... I'LL CALL HIM RIGHT AWAY!
"THE D.A. WAS UNDER A BOSS RULE, AND AS SOON AS DAD LEFT----"
HELLO... HELLO, BOSS? LISTEN... SOME GUY WAS JUST IN TO SEE THE D.A. ... YEAH! WE'VE GOT TO STOP HIM! YEA, I'LL TRAIL HIM!
"IMMEDIATELY, THEY BEGIN TO TRAIL HIM!"
"DAD STOPPED BY AT THE HOUSE ON THE WAY TO THE PAPER..."
THERE'S THE STORY! NOW THAT WE'RE READY TO ACT, I WANT YOU TO KNOW.
GEE, DAD.. ARE YOU SURE THIS ISN'T TOO DANGEROUS?

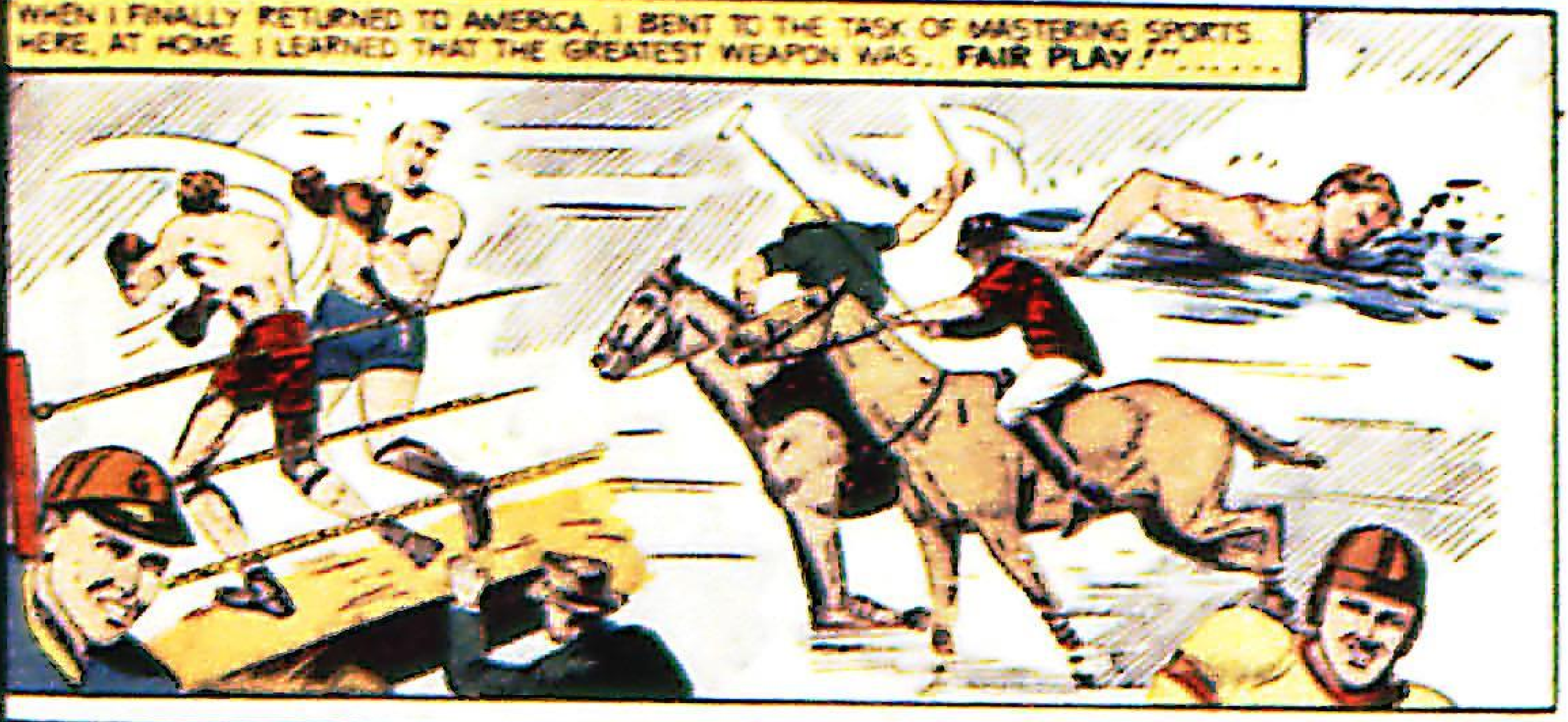

"ON HIS WAY TO THE PAPER.. DAD SAW A CAR PULL UP.. HE DECIDED THE EVIDENCE WOULD BE SAFER IN A NEARBY MAILBOX.."
HEY! HOLD ON THERE, MISTER.. DON'T DROP THAT...
...LETTER! I'D HATE TO HAVE TO ROB THE MAIL!
OHHH!
"I HEARD THE SHOT.. AND RAN OUT.. BUT I WAS TOO LATE!"
DAD!
YOU RAT! GIVE ME THAT LETTER..
?
..I'LL GIVE YOU.. THIS!
"SOMEBODY CALLED AN AMBULANCE AND WE WERE BOTH TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL"...
THE OLD MAN IS SINKING FAST WE'LL HAVE TO HURRY!
"I GUESS I WAS OUT FOR QUITE A WHILE... BUT WHEN I AWOKE... THEY TOLD ME..."
SON.. YOUR FATHER IS DEAD!
LET ME OUT OF HERE. I'LL GET THOSE SKUNKS. LET GO!
DOCTOR! HELP ME. QUICKLY!

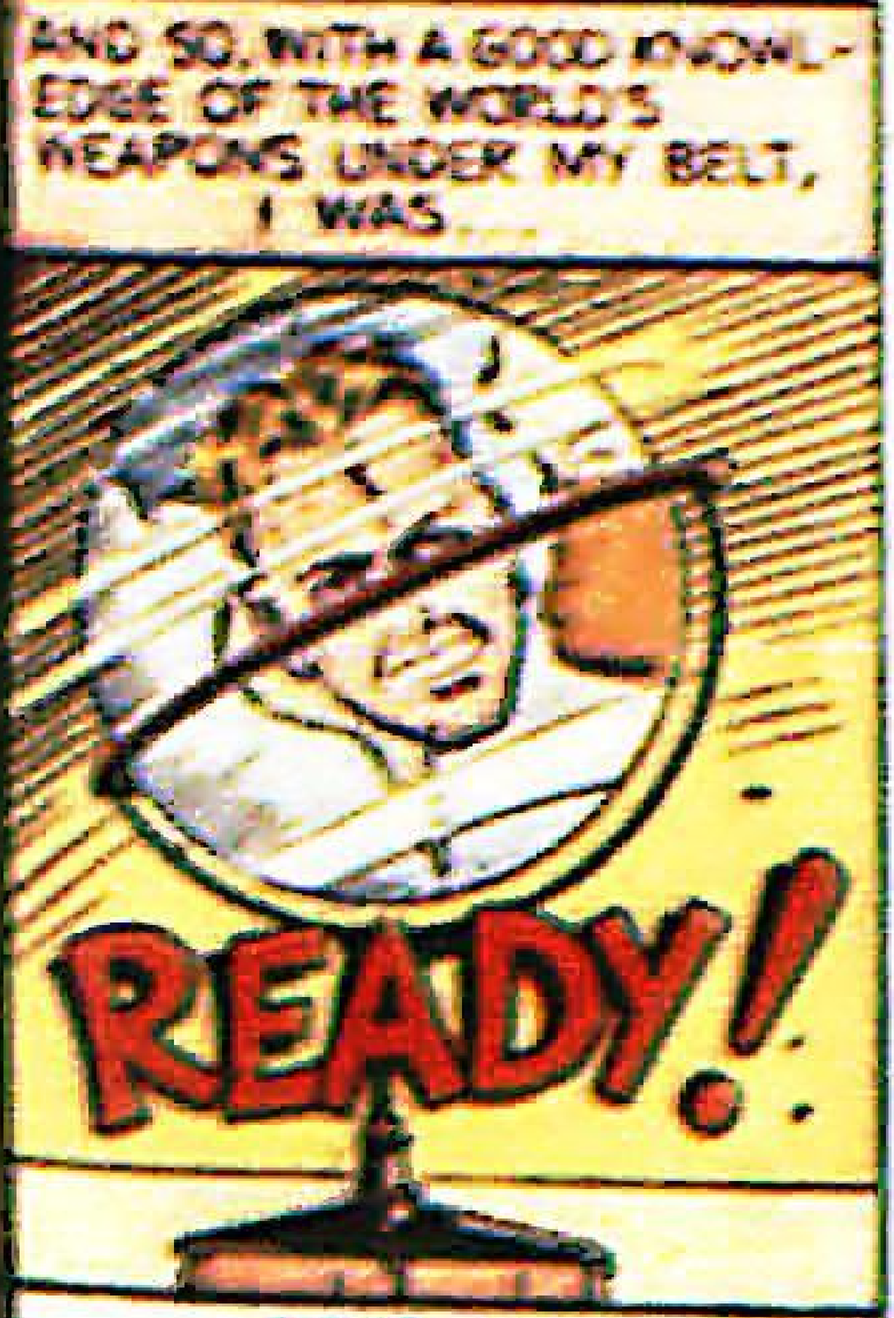

"WHEN I LEFT THE HOSPITAL, I HAD MADE UP MY MIND..."
WELL, LOOKS LIKE I'LL HAVE TO QUIT LAW SCHOOL.... THERE'S A JOB TO BE DONE!
I'M GOING TO TRAVEL ALL OVER THE WORLD AND LEARN TO USE EVERY CONCEIVABLE WEAPON... THEN I SHALL BE READY!
"SOON I HAD ENOUGH MONEY TO START. I HAD SOLD ALL MY POSSESSIONS...ALL I HAD LEFT WAS A BURNING DESIRE TO FIGHT!"
"IN JAPAN I PERFECTED MYSELF IN THE EXCITING ART OF JIU-JITSU
UP YOU GO!
"IN THE MOUNTAINS OF TIBET I WAS INTRODUCED TO THE MYSTERIES OF CHEMISTRY!"
"CONTINUOUSLY, I TRAVELLED, STOPPING ONLY WHERE I COULD LEARN TO USE ANOTHER WEAPON!"
"THEN, IN INDIA, THEY TAUGHT ME HOW TO CONTROL MY NERVES...I COULD SIT ON SPIKES WITHOUT EVEN FEELING THEM!
SAY, THIS FEELS LIKE A CUSHION!
"LATER, IN PARIS, I WAS INSTRUCTED HOW TO USE THE SWORD!"
EN GARDE!

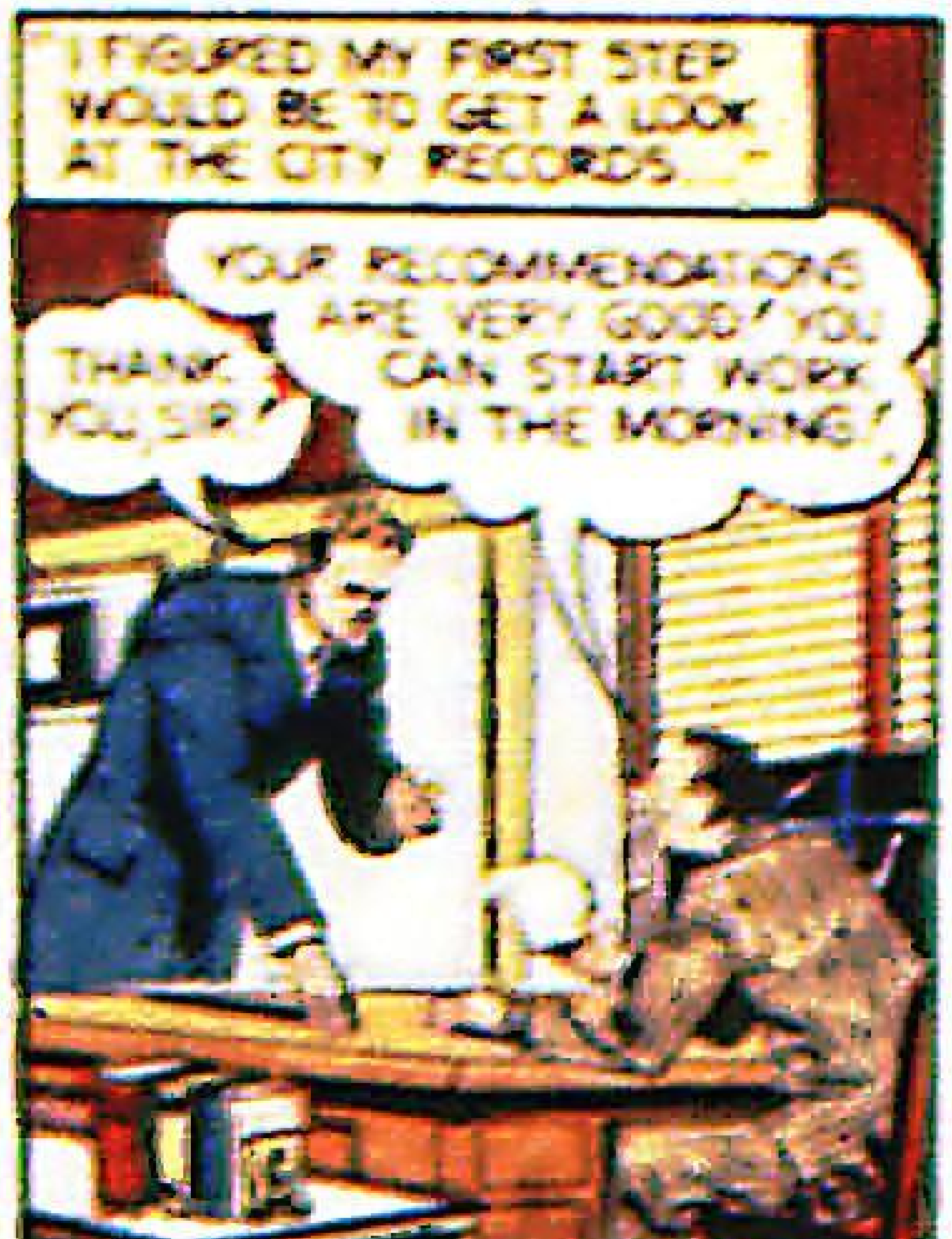

"THE GERMANS SOON LEARNED THAT AN AMERICAN COULD "OUTSHOOT THEIR BEST MARKSMEN!"
BANG! BANG! BANG
ACH! VE COULD USE HIM IN OUR ARMY!
YA, SURE!

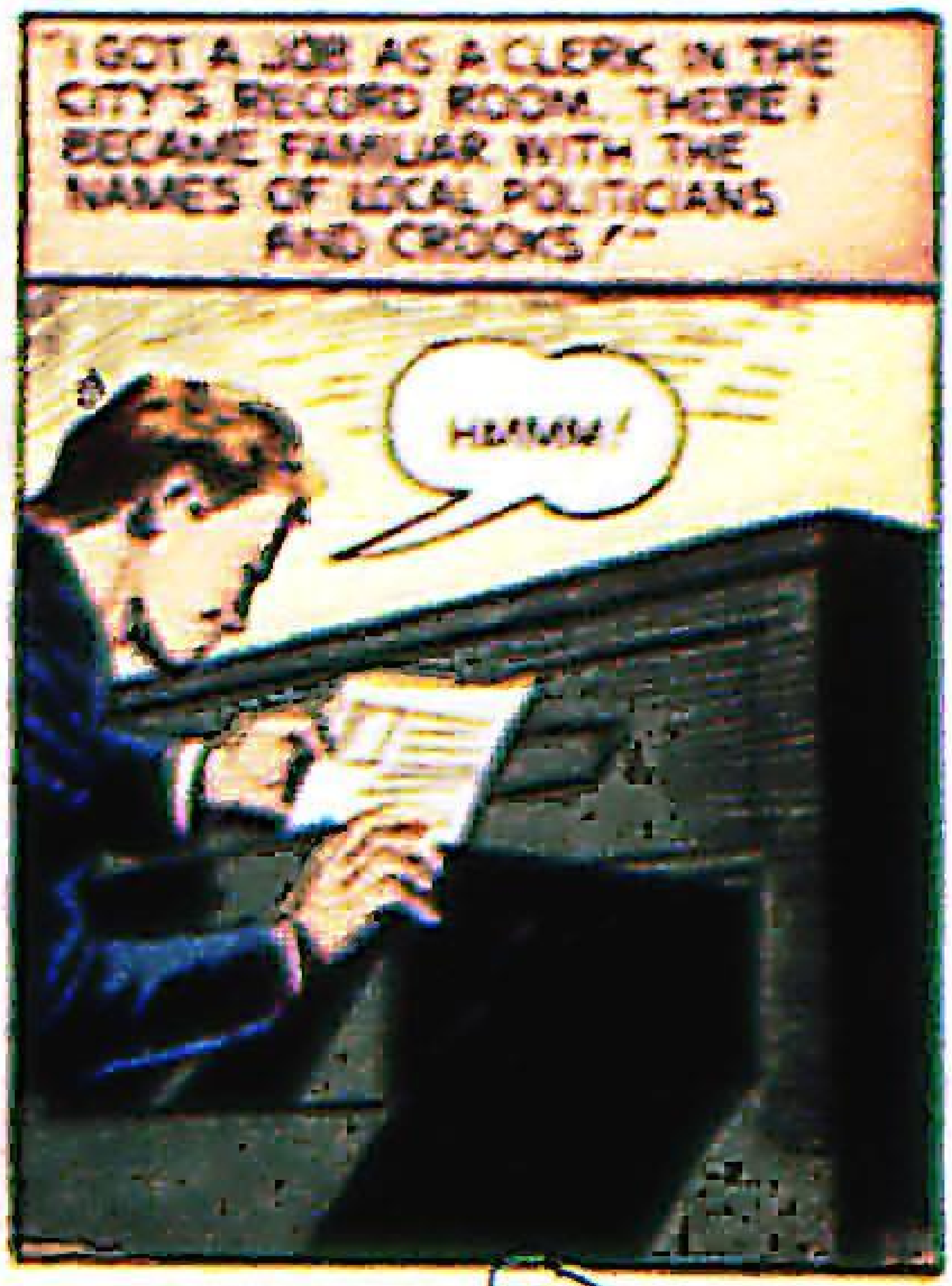

"IN ENGLAND, THEY SHOWED ME A FEW TRICKS IN AERIAL COMBAT"

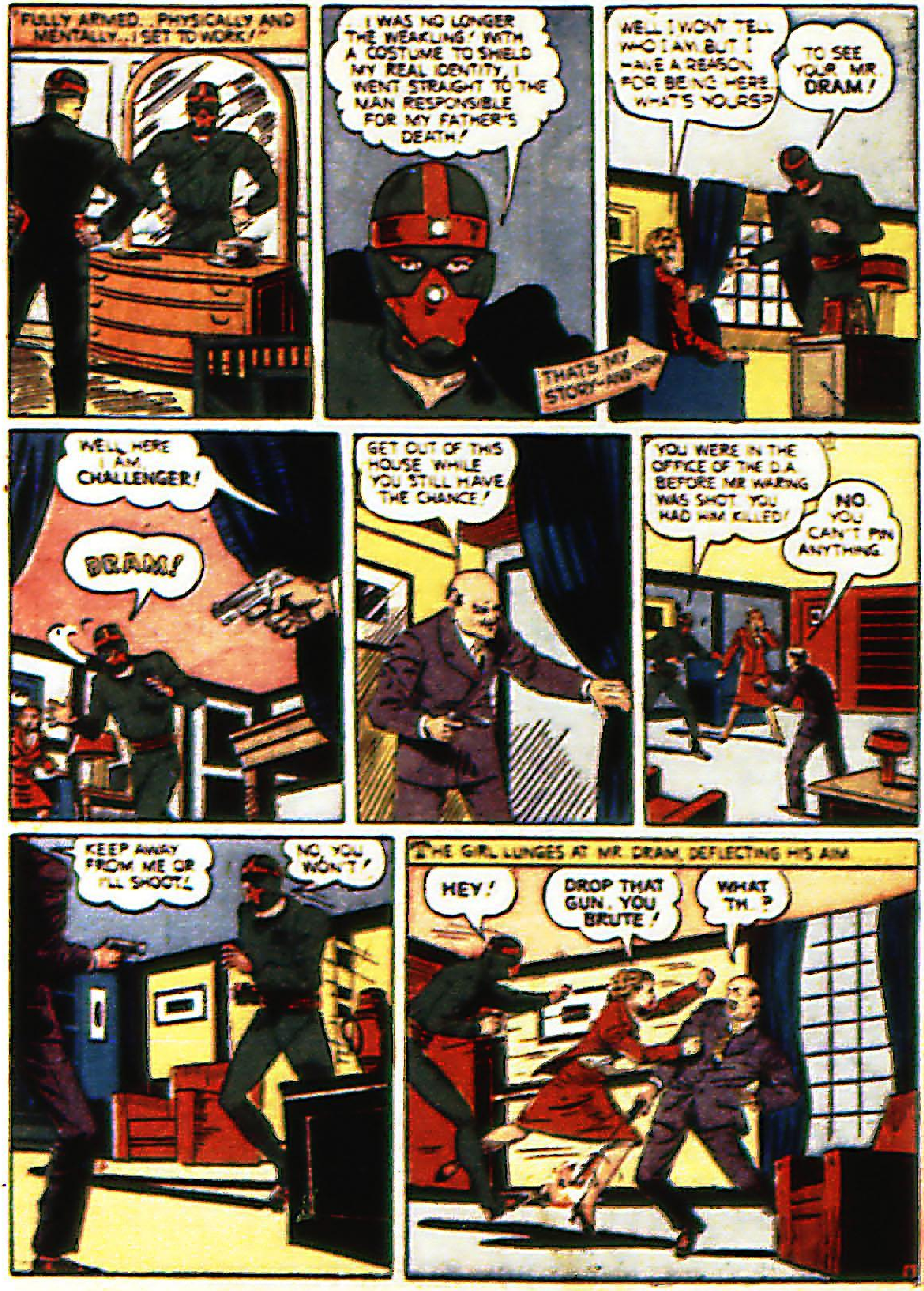

BLIMEY! THAT BLOKE'S A HUMAN DEVIL!

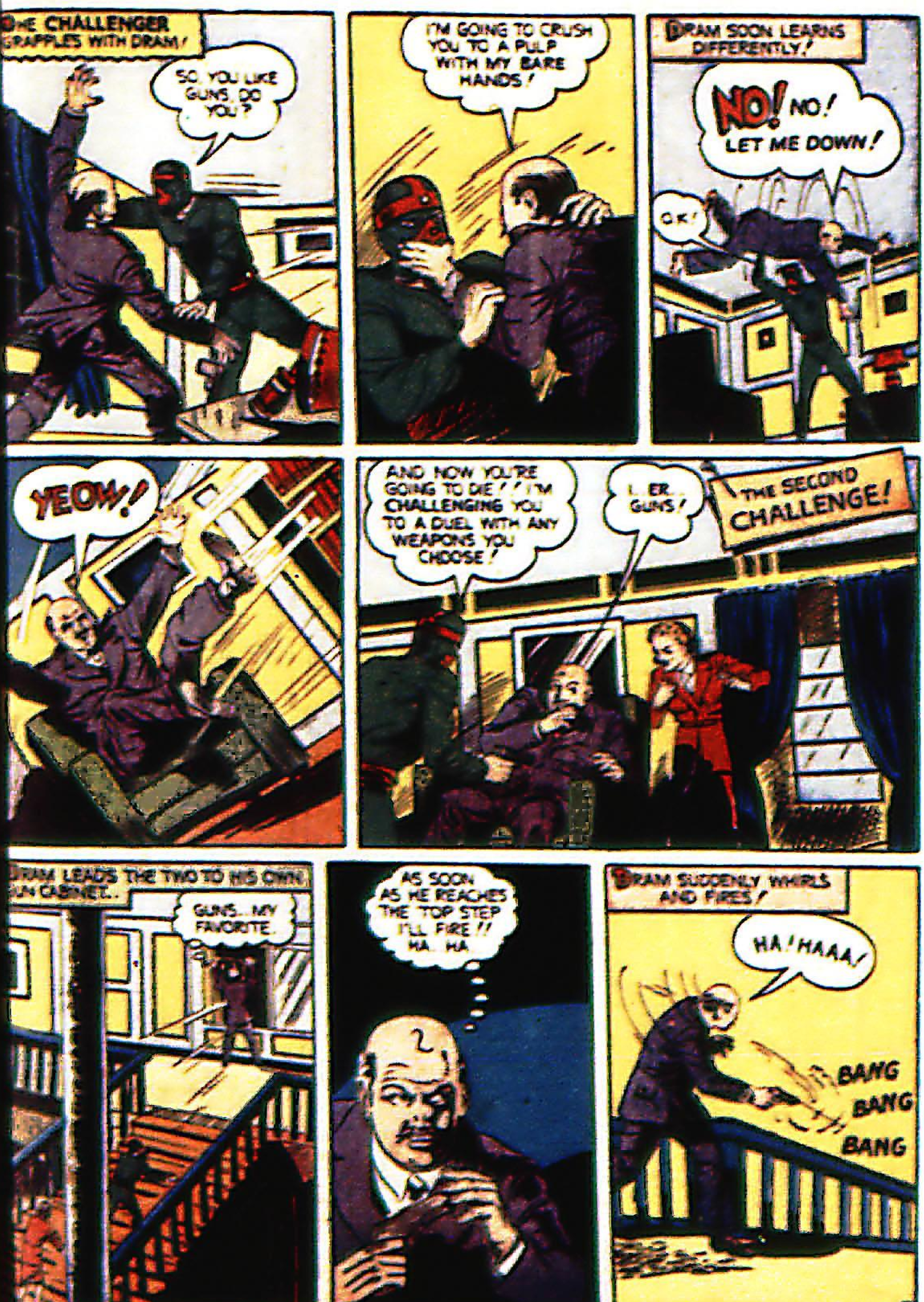

WHEN I FINALLY RETURNED TO AMERICA, I BENT TO THE TASK OF MASTERING SPORTS. HERE, AT HOME, I LEARNED THAT THE GREATEST WEAPON WAS.. FAIR PLAY!".......

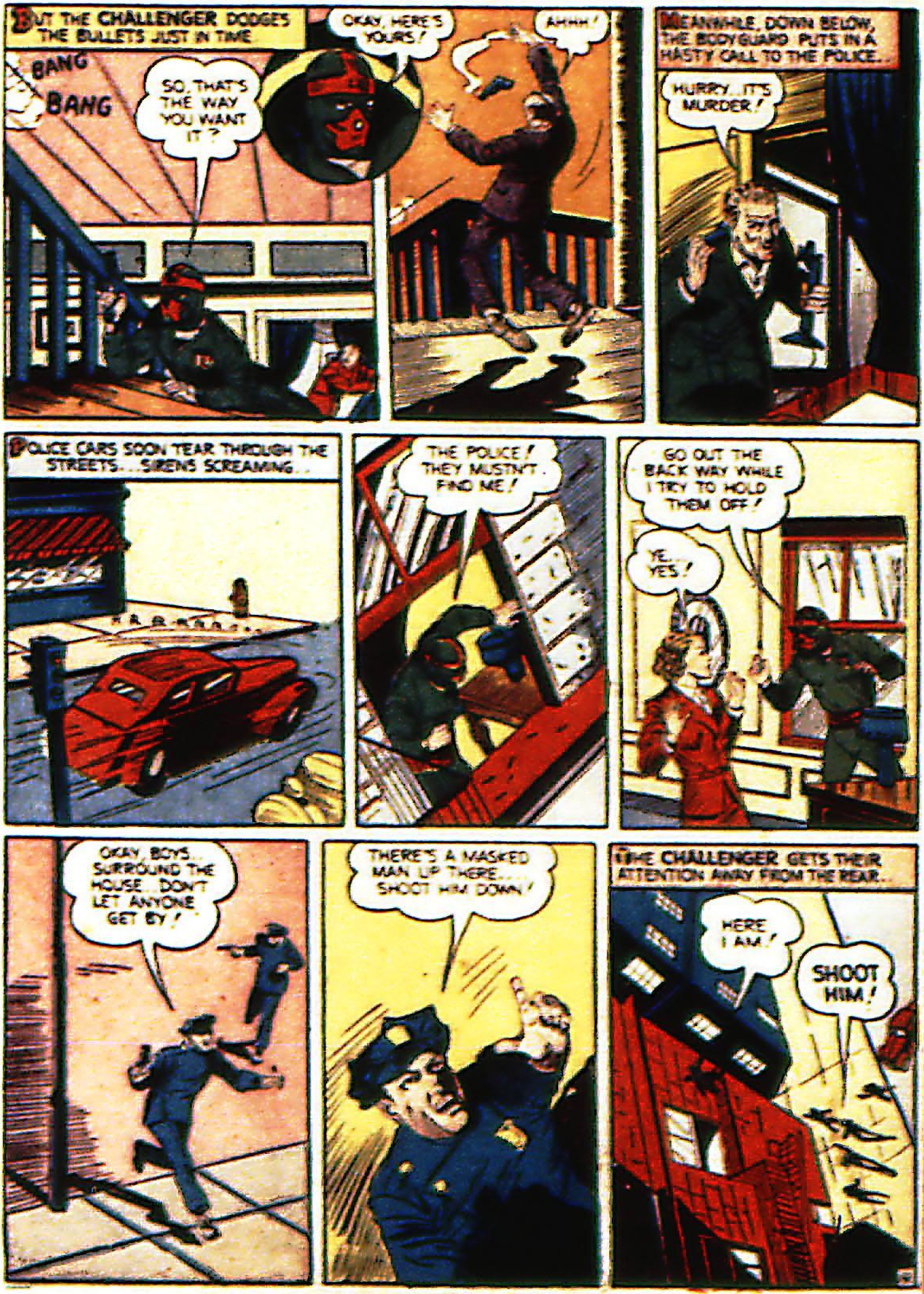

AND SO, WITH A GOOD KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD'S WEAPONS UNDER MY BELT, I WAS....
READY!
AS THE CHALLENGER!

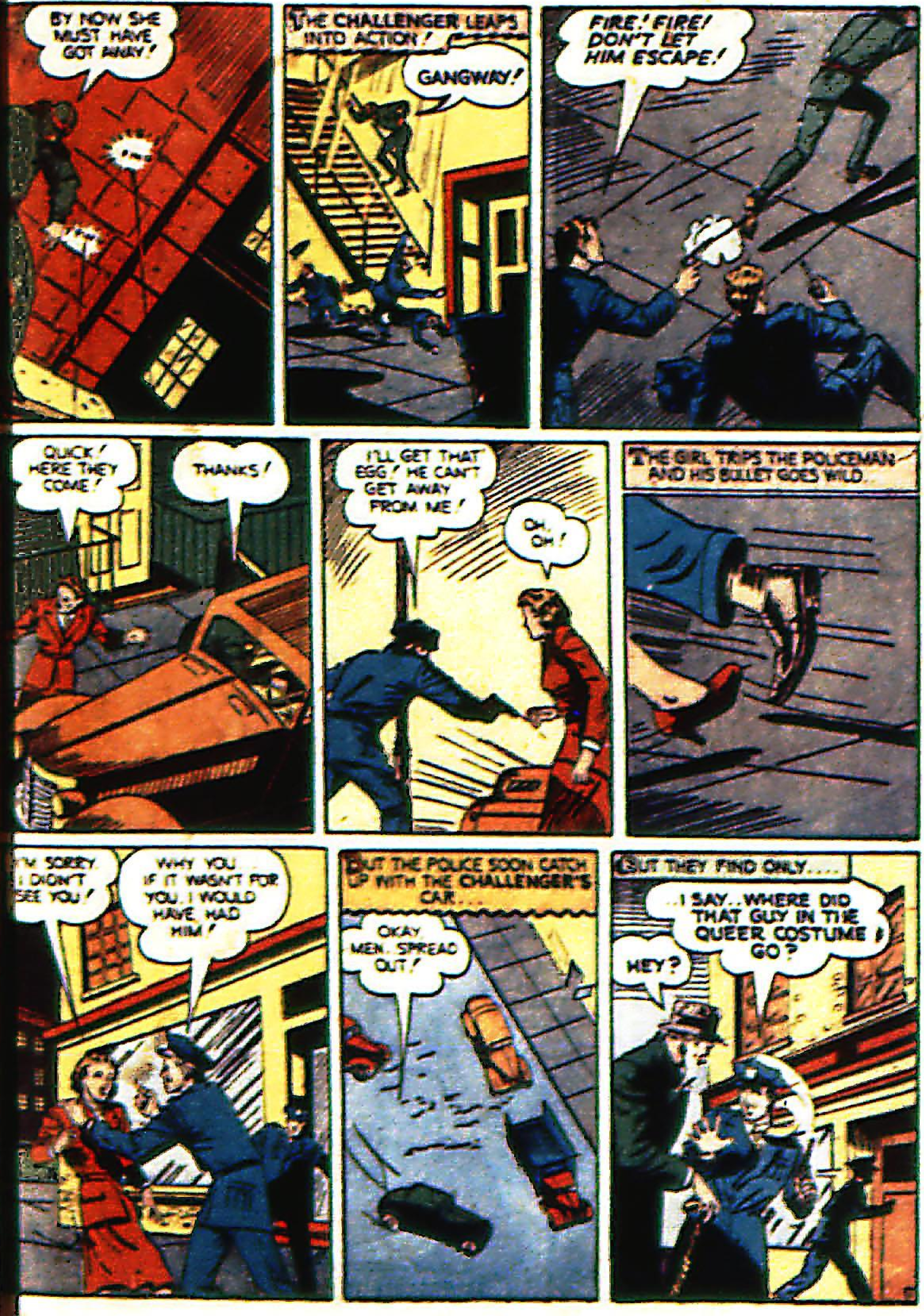

"I FIGURED MY FIRST STEP WOULD BE TO GET A LOOK AT THE CITY RECORDS..."
YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS ARE VERY GOOD! YOU CAN START WORK IN THE MORNING!
THANK YOU, SIR!

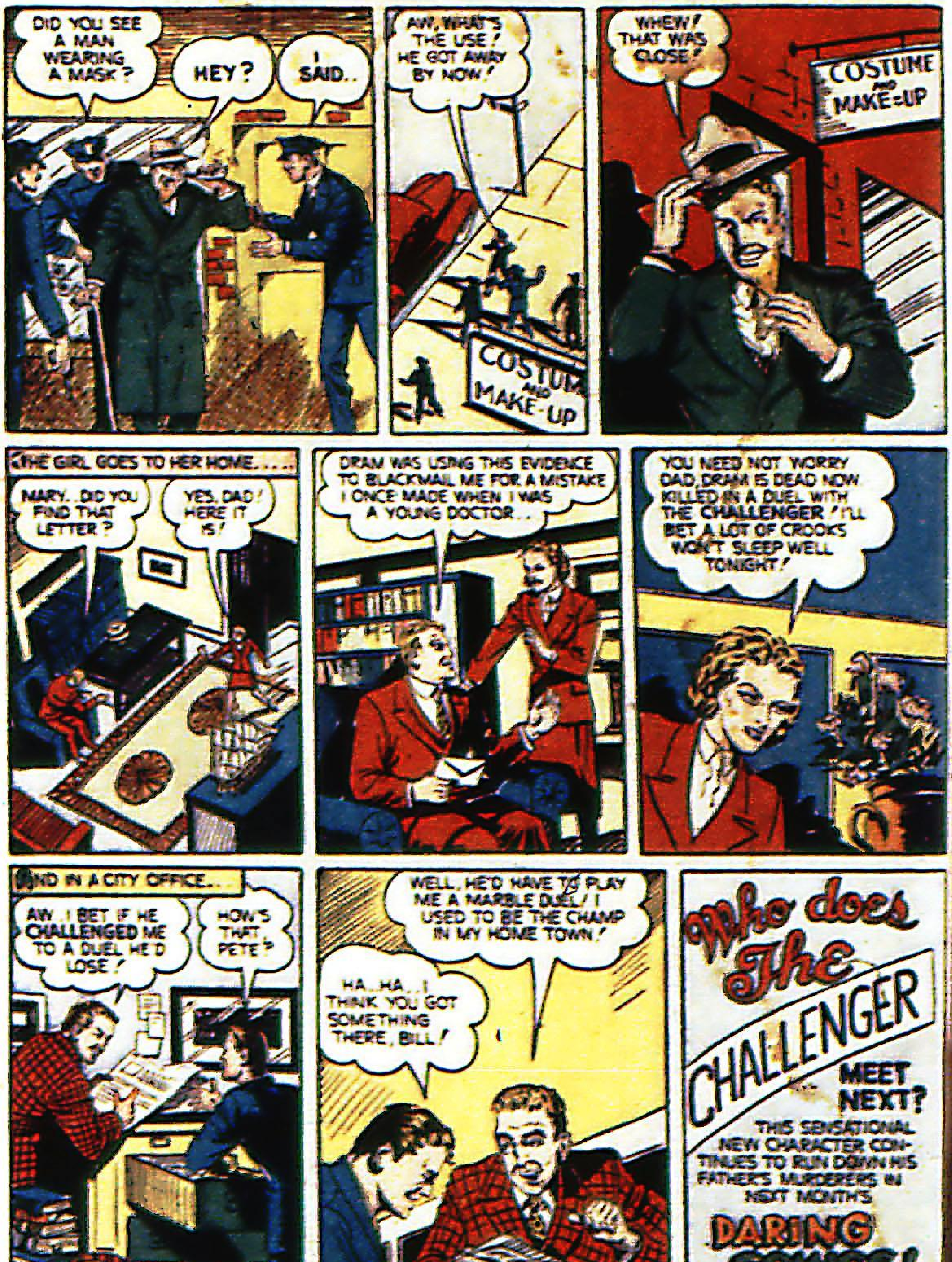

"I GOT A JOB AS A CLERK IN THE CITY'S RECORD ROOM. THERE I BECAME FAMILIAR WITH THE NAMES OF LOCAL POLITICIANS AND CROOKS!"
HMMM!


FULLY ARMED...PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY...I SET TO WORK!"
...I WAS NO LONGER THE WEAKLING! WITH A COSTUME TO SHIELD MY REAL IDENTITY, I WENT STRAIGHT TO THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR MY FATHER'S DEATH!
THAT'S MY STORY—AND NOW
WELL I WON'T TELL WHO I AM, BUT I HAVE A REASON FOR BEING HERE. WHAT'S YOURS?
TO SEE YOUR MR. DRAM!
WELL, HERE I AM, CHALLENGER!
DRAM!
GET OUT OF THIS HOUSE WHILE YOU STILL HAVE THE CHANCE!
YOU WERE IN THE OFFICE OF THE D.A. BEFORE MR WARING WAS SHOT. YOU HAD HIM KILLED!
NO. YOU CAN'T PIN ANYTHING.
KEEP AWAY FROM ME OR I'LL SHOOT!
NO, YOU WON'T!
THE GIRL LUNGES AT MR. DRAM, DEFLECTING HIS AIM
HEY!
DROP THAT GUN, YOU BRUTE!
WHAT TH..?


THE CHALLENGER GRAPPLES WITH DRAM!
SO YOU LIKE GUNS, DO YOU?
I'M GOING TO CRUSH YOU TO A PULP WITH MY BARE HANDS!
DRAM SOON LEARNS DIFFERENTLY!
NO! NO! LET ME DOWN!
O.K.!
YEOW!
AND NOW YOU'RE GOING TO DIE!! I'M CHALLENGING YOU TO A DUEL WITH ANY WEAPONS YOU CHOOSE!
I, ER.. GUNS!
THE SECOND CHALLENGE!
RAM LEADS THE TWO TO HIS OWN UN CABINET..
GUNS...MY FAVORITE.
AS SOON AS HE REACHES THE TOP STEP I'LL FIRE!! HA. HA
DRAM SUDDENLY WHIRLS AND FIRES!
HA! HAAA!
BANG
BANG
BANG


BUT THE CHALLENGER DODGES THE BULLETS JUST IN TIME
BANG
BANG
SO, THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT ?
OKAY, HERE'S YOURS!
AHHH!
MEANWHILE, DOWN BELOW, THE BODYGUARD PUTS IN A HASTY CALL TO THE POLICE..
HURRY...IT'S MURDER!
POLICE CARS SOON TEAR THROUGH THE STREETS...SIRENS SCREAMING..
THE POLICE! THEY MUSTN'T FIND ME!
GO OUT THE BACK WAY WHILE I TRY TO HOLD THEM OFF!
YE.. YES!
OKAY, BOYS.. SURROUND THE HOUSE.. DON'T LET ANYONE GET BY!
THERE'S A MASKED MAN UP THERE.... SHOOT HIM DOWN!
THE CHALLENGER GETS THEIR ATTENTION AWAY FROM THE REAR..
HERE I AM!
SHOOT HIM!


BY NOW SHE MUST HAVE GOT AWAY!
THE CHALLENGER LEAPS INTO ACTION!
GANGWAY!
FIRE! FIRE! DON'T LET HIM ESCAPE!
QUICK! HERE THEY COME!
THANKS!
I'LL GET THAT EGG! HE CAN'T GET AWAY FROM ME!
OH, OH!
THE GIRL TRIPS THE POLICEMAN AND HIS BULLET GOES WILD.
'M SORRY. I DIDN'T SEE YOU!
WHY YOU... IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU, I WOULD HAVE HAD HIM!
BUT THE POLICE SOON CATCH UP WITH THE CHALLENGER'S CAR...
OKAY, MEN.. SPREAD OUT!
BUT THEY FIND ONLY....
HEY?
..I SAY..WHERE DID THAT GUY IN THE QUEER COSTUME GO?


DID YOU SEE A MAN WEARING A MASK?
HEY?
I SAID..
AW, WHAT'S THE USE! HE GOT AWAY BY NOW!
COSTUME AND MAKE-UP
WHEW! THAT WAS CLOSE!
COSTUME AND MAKE-UP
THE GIRL GOES TO HER HOME.....
MARY..DID YOU FIND THAT LETTER?
YES, DAD! HERE IT IS!
DRAM WAS USING THIS EVIDENCE TO BLACKMAIL ME FOR A MISTAKE I ONCE MADE WHEN I WAS A YOUNG DOCTOR..
YOU NEED NOT WORRY DAD, DRAM IS DEAD NOW KILLED IN A DUEL WITH THE CHALLENGER! I'LL BET A LOT OF CROOKS WON'T SLEEP WELL TONIGHT!
AND IN A CITY OFFICE..
AW..I BET IF HE CHALLENGED ME TO A DUEL HE'D LOSE!
HOW'S THAT, PETE?
WELL, HE'D HAVE TO PLAY ME A MARBLE DUEL! I USED TO BE THE CHAMP IN MY HOME TOWN!
HA..HA..I THINK YOU GOT SOMETHING THERE, BILL!
Who does The CHALLENGER MEET NEXT?
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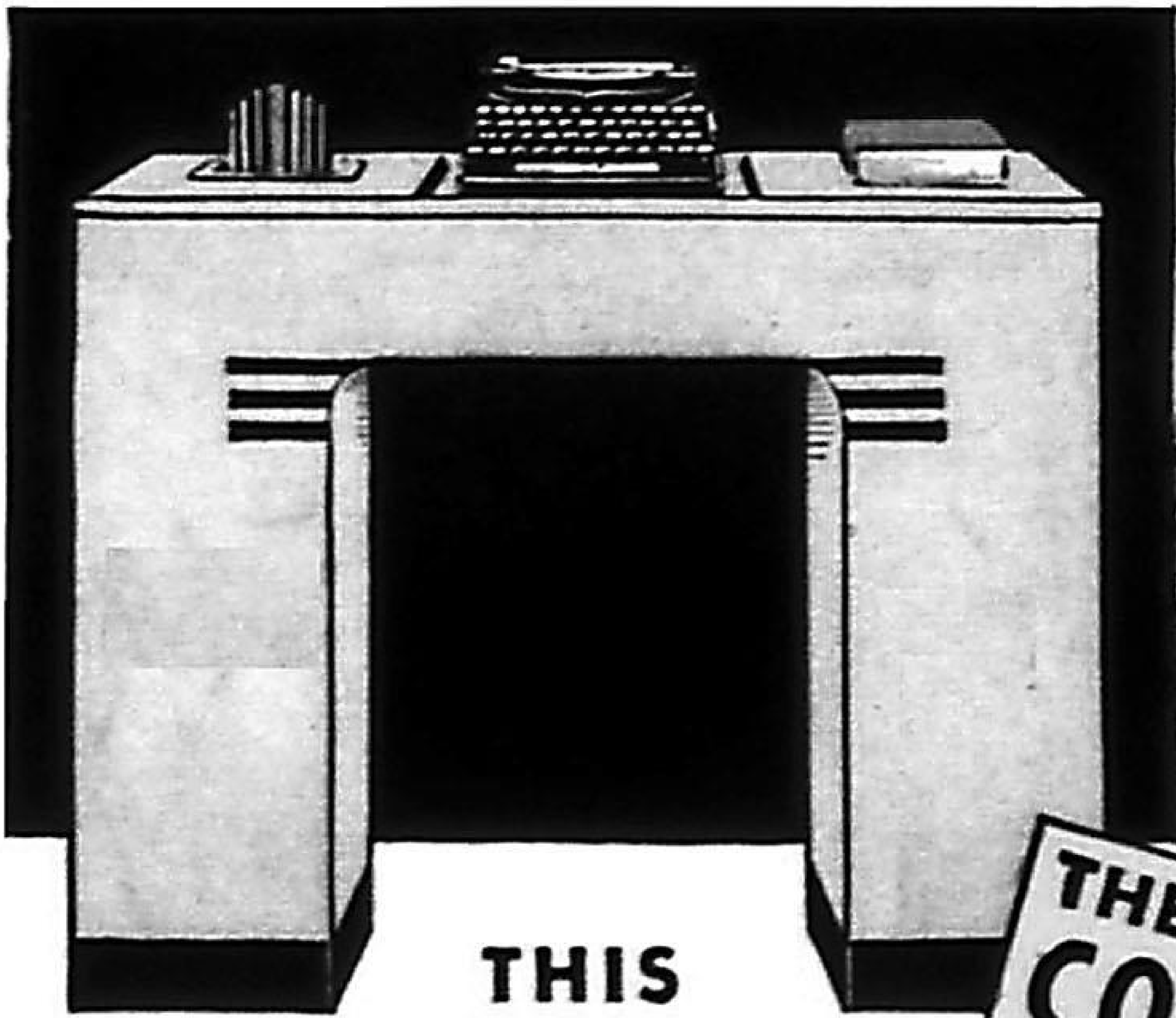

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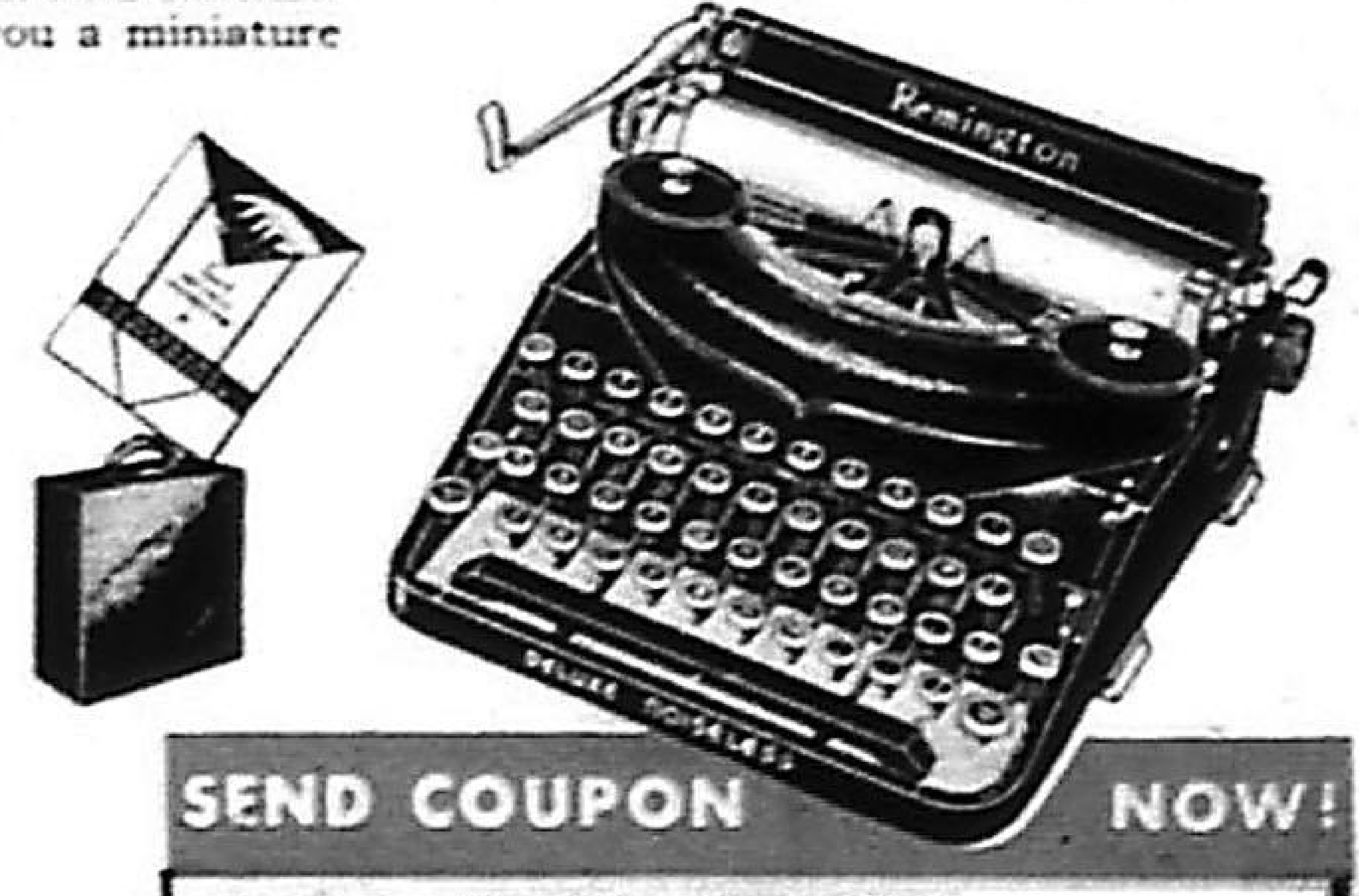

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